

BARNES 1984

BANDWAGON

JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Farber Co. Racine, WI

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1984



THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 28, No. 5

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Fred D. Pfening III, Managing Editor and Joseph T. Bradbury, Associate Editor

BANDWAGON, The Journal of the Circus Historical Society (USPS 406-390), is published bi-monthly. Editorial, advertising and circulation office is located at 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43221, Phone (614) 294-5361. Advertising rates are: Full page \$85.00, Half page \$45.00, Quarter page \$25.00. Minimum ad \$18.00.

Subscription rates \$16.00 per year to members and non-members in the United States, \$18.00 per year outside the United States. Single copies \$2.50 each plus 90¢ postage. POSTMASTER send address changes to **BANDWAGON**, 1075 West Fifth Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43212.

Offices of the Circus Historical Society are located at 800 Richey Rd., Zanesville, Ohio 43701.

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THIS MONTH'S COVER

Continuing our tribute to the 1884 season, this month's cover features an advertising booklet from Buffalo Bill's Wild West from that year. The tour was significant for William F. Cody in that it marked the beginning of his long and lucrative relationship with Nathan Salsbury, and because it was the first time the classic title, "Buffalo Bill's Wild West" was used. In 1883, Cody's first year in the outdoor show business, he was in partnership with William F. Carver, and the show was titled Cody and Carver.

This thirty-six page booklet measures approximately 6" x 10" and was printed by the Calhoun Printing Company of Hartford, Connecticut, one of the last of the wood block show print houses. The lithographed cover was done by Boston's Forbes Lithograph Co., and is in natural colors with an emphasis on the lush greens of the idealized prairie. Original in Pfening Archives.

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William T. Kelley 74 Pilgrim Ave. Worcester, Mass. 01604	#2866

CHRISTMAS ADVERTISING

The November-December issue of the **Bandwagon** is traditionally the largest of the year. This super size issue is possible because of the advertising purchased by circuses and by CHS members wishing to extend Christmas greetings.

The advertising rates remain the same as prior years: full page, \$85.00; half page, \$45.00; and quarter page, \$25.00. The minimum ad size is \$18.00. Please send your copy and payment to the editor to be received by December 1, 1984.

NEW CIRCUS WORLD MUSEUM BOARD

William Kidd, president of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, recently announced the appointment of eight people to the reorganized Historic Sites Foundation board of directors which oversees the Circus World Museum in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

Three members of the new board are long time CHS members. They are Paul Ingrassia, Rockford, Illinois, president of a large wholesale distribution company, a member of the Circus World Museum endowment committee, and vice-president of CWM, Inc.; James Kieffer, a Baraboo manufacturer and a member of the old Historic Sites board; and Fred D. Pfening III, a Columbus, Ohio manufacturer, vice-president of the CHS, and managing editor of the *Bandwagon*. Ingrassia and Pfening are the first board members to reside outside Wisconsin.

Other appointees include: Blake Kellogg, Fred Risser, Wayne McGown, Sarah Kimball, Carol Skornicka, Don Pierce, and Jack Epstein.

At the board's first meeting on September 6, Ingrassia was elected president and Kieffer treasurer of the Historic Sites Foundation.

For Sale Forty Years Of Collecting

Catalogue \$2.00
Refundable
with Purchase

Allan Bratton
1581 29th Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94122

IRVIN FELD DEAD AT 66

"Good-bye Irvin. Thank you for all the pleasures you have given us." Signed, "children of all ages."

Such is the lament of everyone who has seen the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus in the last seventeen years. Feld produced the great show. His passing leaves a void in the show world. To Irvin Feld's considerable credit to fill this void he was able to produce, teach, and train a son to take over the presidency of the Greatest Show on Earth. His predecessors, Barnum, Bailey, and the seven Ringlings were unable to do so.

Feld often said "our circus has a great obligation to the people of America. We are expected to be the greatest as well as a wholesome, exciting show for every member of the family, and that, I pledge, we will always remember." He knew the very name of his circus was a household word throughout the country. He knew it was truly an American institution that has been written about steadily in books, magazines and newspapers. His circus has inspired songs and poems, movies, plays, and television shows.

He was proud of his circus and its unblemished 114 year old record. He was particularly proud of its enormous size and its lavish three hour performance. Under his guidance he not only saved this venerable institution from possible oblivion, but increased its size and scope. In the domain of Irvin Feld, pleasure reigned supreme. Through his son Kenneth these ideas will carry on.



In a 1972 *Milwaukee Journal* interview, Feld said, "When I can walk into the Madison Square Garden and see perhaps 20,000 people of all ages laughing and having a good time, I have a great feeling of satisfaction."

People who have had business dealings with him say he was a tough but fair businessman, that he was very astute. The key to his success was perhaps his dedication and untold amounts of energy. "I do not want to do anything I can't be on top of," he said to *People* magazine in 1980. In *Nation's Business* in 1978 he was quoted as saying "Words like 'never,' 'you can't,' and 'it's impossible' have a provocative effect. I simply cannot accept such negativism."

If anyone calls the show's main office in Washington, D.C. the operator announces "Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey." She just doesn't say "circus." Feld was proud of the full name. A reporter from *Nation's Business* asked him "Will you ever change the name of the circus or add your name?" To which he answered, "Never. It would be like adding your name to the Washington Monument. I would like to be remembered for having made a contribution to the continuance of the circus. You know it is practically all we have left of good wholesome, clean entertainment that the entire family can enjoy." When asked why he didn't have a sideshow, he gave this straightforward answer, "The side show doesn't fit in with the kind of wholesome entertainment we want to present."

In 1967 when Feld and his brother Israel purchased the famous circus it was the first time in 96 years that the Greatest Show on Earth did not belong to any

of the founding families. "Ringling Bros. is a name known worldwide," he told a *Chicago Tribune* reporter in 1976. "It is an honor for any performer to appear on our circus." *Amusement Business* commented in 1975, "Irvin Feld is the caretaker of an American institution rather than a circus producer."

In 1974 the *Chicago Daily News* asked him what was the circus all about his reply: "The essence of the circus is its precision, timing, and the fact that our kind of entertainment makes you forget your cares." Interestingly in 1899 Alf T. Ringling wrote in part "the circus with its innocent sights of joy for the children and its power to make all men and women children again for at least one day comes the nearest to fulfilling the mission of amusement." Once he owned the great circus, Irvin Feld dedicated his life to perpetuating the superb and respected traditions of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus — the Greatest Show on Earth.

In closing, let us quote from the 1894 Ringling Bros. route book:

*These are moments in life that are
never forgot,
Which brighten and brighten, as time
steals away,
They give a new charm to the
happiest lot,
And they shine on the gloom of the
loneliest day.*

Thank you, Irvin, for these memorable moments at your circus. C.P. Fox



AL G. BARNES' BIG FOUR-RING WILD ANIMAL CIRCUS

1921 SEASON
By Chang Reynolds

The second year of this decade of the twentieth century was marked by several auspicious moves in the circus business. Probably one of the most important for the industry as a whole was the decision by the Ringling brothers to introduce wild animal acts into their performance. The Ringling-Barnum organization introduced four trainers to their program, all of whom were very capable performers. From the Selig Zoo in Los Angeles, Olga Celeste arrived. Peter Radke was scheduled for a lion act and Rudolph Matthies was brought on for a tiger act. Christian Shroder has a big polar bear act. In display No. 2 of the performance Celeste, Radke and Shroder performed. Matthies and his tigers were a solo feature in Display No. 4.

To prove that this was no one-year trial the Ringling-Barnum Circus purchased the animals of the defunct Santos & Artigas Circus which folded in Cuba at the end of the year. Thus, for the Big One in 1922 there were added a performing group of nine polar bears; a group of seven lions; one group of five leopards; a large mixed group of lions, tigers, black leopards and dogs. From a Mr. Schell the circus purchased his performing lion group. Also, from the Cuban circus, they bought two horses along with a lion and a tiger that per-

formed a riding act. In addition, the Greatest Show on Earth brought to the United States two troupes of twelve horses each, presumably Liberty acts. With all this the Ringling-Barnum show was in the animal act business in a big way.

There was no apparent reaction to all this from the foremost trained wild animal circus in the country, based in Palms, California. At least it was not recorded at the time. However, it can be assumed that the Barnes' management fully realized that it would no longer hold the monopoly as a trained wild animal show. And, presumably, it also made plans to offset this intrusion into their traditional position.

A second thrust at the Barnes' organization was the drive of Mugivan and Bowers to compete with Al G.'s traditional western route. In order to accomplish this, the Eastern outfit fielded four above-average shows in 1921. They were the Sells-Floto, Hagenbeck-Wallace, John Robinson, and Howe's Great London Circuses. The latter was scheduled to make a run to the West Coast as soon as it opened and to compete with Barnes for the spring business. The reader will recall that the Barnes' Circus had opposition from another Mugivan and Bowers show, the John Robinson Circus, a couple of years

earlier in Canada and the northern Plains states.

The Howe's Show, under the management of Dan Odom, left Lancaster, Mo., on 16 March and began its long run to the coast. Its first performance was at Albuquerque, New Mexico, on the 26th. This circus featured a strong performance which was very similar and probably equal to that of the Al G. Barnes' Circus. There were nine elephants with Howe's under the direction of Joe Metcalf. There were several wild animal acts interspersed with aerial and gymnastic numbers. The trainers were "Chubby" Guilfoyle and his wife, Harriett, and Charles Berry and Louis Roth, both former Barnes' employees.

Four performing lions were found dead in their cages when the show stopped at Wellington, Kansas, for feed and water. The word went out that the four valuable animals had been poisoned—probably by a disgruntled employee. This writer was well acquainted in later years with Charles "Pitt" Goetman who worked for Roth and Guilfoyle in 1921. Goetman had toured with Sells-Floto from 1910 until he was drafted into the army in 1917. Upon his return from the military he spent a year with his old show, Sells-Floto, and then started 1921 with Howe's Great London Circus. He reported that carelessness was the cause of the death of the lions enroute to Wellington, Kansas. The cages were closed up tightly when they were loaded because of the cold weather; even the vents that were supposed to supply air were fastened shut. As a result the animals suffocated, but word was circulated that they had been poisoned.

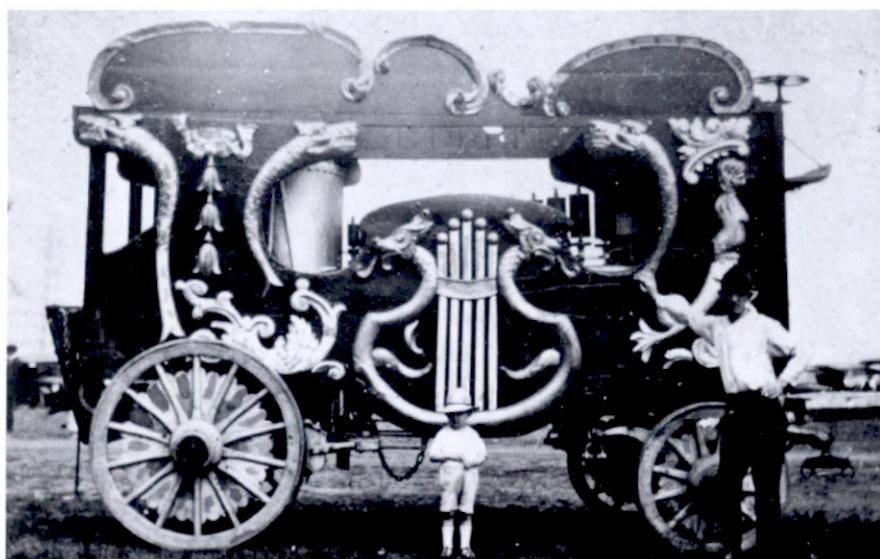
The Howe's Great London Circus made its first California stand on 5 April at Riverside. That town was the Barnes' second stand of the season on 9 March. By the time the Mugivan and Bowers show reached the Golden State, the Barnes' Circus was nearing San Francisco and completed twenty-seven dates in southern and central California.

In addition to the four (thirty cars each) shows that the Mugivan-Bowers-Ballard outfit put on the road in 1921, other railroad circuses for the year were Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey, Gentry Bros., Rhoda Royal, Walter L. Main, Sparks, Campbell-Bailey-Hutchinson, Palmer Bros. and, of course, the Al G. Barnes' Circus.

Opposition for the Barnes' Show was

AI G. Barnes steam calliope on the lot at Logansport, Ind., Aug. 10, 1921. Logansport natives Arthur Loftin and his son are standing in front. This was Barnes' first

steam calliope wagon which had been modified by addition of a skyboard formerly on a cage sometime after 1915. George Piercy Collection.



plentiful that year. In addition to the early spring dates in California played by Howe's Great London, the Sells-Floto Circus made a 34-day tour of the state during the fall. While there was no direct conflict with the Barnes' Circus in the autumn months, those Floto Show dates did occur while the Barnes' Show was enroute to that area. At Tucson, Arizona, on 1 November the eastern circus encountered the opposition

Al G. Barnes newspaper ad for the San Francisco, Calif. stand, April 13-17, 1921. Although Barnes advertised for several seasons that he had a rare okapi the show never had one at any time. Pfening Archives.

8th and Market
5 Days Starting
Wed., Apr. 13

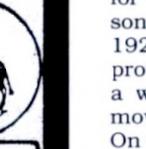
AL G. BARNES BIG 4 RING WILD ANIMAL CIRCUS

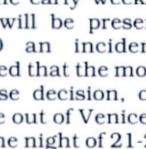
EVERY ACT AN ANIMAL ACT - EVERY ANIMAL AN ACTOR

30 AL G. BARNES' \$50,000 CHALLENGE GROUP LIONS 30
IN ONE BIG ACT
20 The Most Amazing Animal Act Ever! PERFORMING BENGAL AND SIBERIAN TIGERS 20
Including Rajah, \$10,000 Wrestling Tiger
THE ONLY REAL WILD ANIMAL CIRCUS ON EARTH.


LOTUS
5-TON PERFORMING HIPPOPOTAMUS


SEE
THE ONLY EDUCATED ZEBRAS IN THE WORLD


SEE
THE ONLY OKAPI IN CAPTIVITY


THE AVIATING LION
SAMSON

40 An Equestrian Act Supreme 40
Dancing Horses-Dancing Girls

MR. BARNES OFFERS AS AN ADDED ATTRACTION FOR THE SEASON A MOST NOVEL, STUPENDOUS AND GLITTERINGLY GORGEOUS EXAMPLE OF ALLEGORICAL PAGEANTRY...

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE. HUNDREDS OF HORSES. COUNTLESS ANIMALS

THE FAIRYLAND FANTASY

ALICE IN JUNGLELAND
DOORS OPEN 1 AND 7 P.M.
PERFORMANCES 2 AND 8 P.M.



MURRAY A. PENNOCK
GENERAL AGENT

AL. G. BARNES BIG 4 RING WILD ANIMAL CIRCUS

Los Angeles, Jan. 15th, 1921.

This beautiful Barnes letterhead featuring a tiger and its lady trainer in the art work was used by General Agent Murray A. Pennock for correspondence dated January 15, 1921. Pfening Archives.

brigade of the Palms based circus. Barnes played Tucson on the 7th of that month. It will be noted later in this article that the two shows day and dated in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, on 26 July.

The California show also had opposition with a third Mugivan-Ballard-Bowers circus in Kentucky in late August — this was the John Robinson Circus. Still another show, the two-car Campbell Bros. Circus was making stands in southern California in March 1921. It made, for example, a three-day stand at San Bernardino, 19-21 March. At that time the Barnes' show was in Santa Paula and preparing to move for its long stand in Los Angeles.

Before any further discussion of the Howe's Show tour, some consideration for the early weeks of the Barnes' season will be presented. At the end of 1920 an incident occurred which proved that the move to Palms had been a wise decision, or, at least, that the move out of Venice had been beneficial. On the night of 21-22 December the pier at Venice was totally destroyed by fire. Indeed, the city itself was saved only by the timely change of the wind. Two people died as a result of the fire which probably moved so fast because of the Santa Ana conditions. This latter phenomenon is a frequent fall cyclonic disturbance in southern California during the autumn and early winter months. During a Santa Ana, which may last for several days, hot, dry winds from the desert are hurled through the mountain passes in to the coastal valleys. Most of the very destructive fires which cause untold damage and loss of life and property are the result of these winds. At Venice, in December 1920, the Abbot-Kinney Co., owners of the pier, estimated a loss of \$750,000.

A few days later, circus folks gathered at the new Palms winter quarters to celebrate the holiday. The show's popular press agent, Thomas Francis Heeney, was Santa Claus. A traditional

Christmas feast was held followed by a dance in the new ring barn. Edward Woeckner and his band furnished the music. The next day Al G. had as his guests 300 orphans who were entertained with circus acts and given candy, nuts, etc. The performers who worked for the children were Mabel Stark, Bessie Harvey, Martha Florine, Mabel Gardner, Margaret Thompson, Cheerful Gardner, Eddie Trees, and Bob Thornton.

Notes from the quarters at this time were the usual fare: Mabel Stark had added six more tigers to her large group; Austin King had nearly completed the training of the zebras; and Cheerful Gardner was working on an entirely new elephant act. "Egypt" Thompson had started work on the rebuilding of the train. The show was scheduled to travel on all steel, seventy-foot flats in 1921. The total number of cars for the show was thirty. Seven steel flats and one steel stock car were added. This equipment was furnished by the Mt. Vernon Car. Co. Frank Rooney was at the ranch caring for the baggage stock and was scheduled to be the superintendent of that department in 1921.

Early in February it was announced that Frank A. Cassidy would return to the Barnes' Circus as press agent in advance. Cassidy had been connected with the show off and on for half a dozen years, working in practically every capacity in advance. He left the Barnes' Show early in 1920 to become associated with the Famous Players, Lasky Corporation. The 19 March issue of the *Billboard* carried the usual list of staff for the Al G. Barnes' Circus. This, however, will be omitted at this point since it was very thoroughly covered in the review of the circus compiled at the opening stand at Pomona, Calif., on 8 March. This review was published in the 2 April issue of the *Billboard*.

Late in March this "Want" advertisement appeared in the *Billboard*: "CALLIOPE PLAYERS WANTED FOR AL G. BARNES' CIRCUS. One for Air Calliope, playing with Band, and one for Steam Calliope. Write or wire Los Angeles, Calif., all the week of March



21. Route always in Billboard. Address: Edw. A. Woeckener, Musical Director."

The Barnes' Circus opened at Pomona, Calif., on 8 March 1921 and on 2 April the *Billboard* carried a very complete account of the events. Many paragraphs of this fine report will be included here.

"Away to the most auspicious start in its history the Al G. Barnes' Big Four-Ring Wild Animal Circus opened the 1921 season at Pomona, Calif., to the two largest crowds that ever witnessed the initial performances of 'the show that's different.'

"After three busy months in winter quarters at Barnes' Circus City, near Palms, the entire outfit was loaded on the new trains three days before the opening date and taken to Pomona, where the finishing touches were put on the equipment and the final rehearsals conducted.

"Everything in the parade is new from beginning to end. The Barnes' open den street pageant always has been immensely popular, but this year with the new animals recently imported, it was a revelation—a riot of color, with beautiful women handsomely garbed, and gailey bedecked men. That Pomona people appreciated the show's 'shop window' was indicated in the attendance, the day's receipts being more than one-third greater than ever before in that city. This despite the fact that an opposition circus was billed strong right up to the front door." Howe's Great London played Pomona on 6 April, its second California stand.

A review of the parade wagons available for the street display is in order. Many of them had been purchased during the past two seasons and were, in all probability, all used in the daily street parade.

1. Three Oval Mirror Tableau. This was Barnes' oldest large parade vehicle and was used as the No. 1 Bandwagon at least through 1920, and probably in 1921. However, during the early 1920s the Rhino Tableau was used as the lead bandwagon.

This large outdoor billboard was used to advertise the Al G. Barnes stand at Seattle, Wash., May 18-20, 1921. The lithograph featuring a trainer in a den full of lions was a popular sheet with the show and used extensively in the early and mid 1920's. Pfening Archives.

2. Rhino Tableau — purchased in 1920.

3. Swan and Fawn Tableau — purchased in Baraboo in 1912.

4. Gollmar Bros. Two-tiered Tableau — purchased in 1919.

5. Gollmar Bros. Three Diamond Mirror Tableau — purchased in 1919.

6. Three-section painted Tableau — origin unknown but probably built by Barnes' workmen. (Three sections of paintings on each side.)

7. Steam Calliope — same wagon appears in 1915 photo included with this series of articles. However, there were some changes and it now had a sunboard which had originally appeared on a cage.

8. Air Calliope — One of two used in 1920; the second discarded during that season.

The *Billboard* review continued: "'Alice in Jungleland' is the big feature again this year, but the gorgeous spectacle is so changed that those who enjoyed it last year would not recognize it. Martha Florine continues in the role of 'Alice,' and is as winsome and clever as ever. Bess Harvey, the original prima donna of the white tops—she of the glorious voice and striking personality—charms as the Queen, while George Karmine, late of the San Carlos Opera Company, makes a robust King. Joe Miller is the Rajah, with 'Bones' Hartzell, as the King's jester and Richard La Monte as the Prince. The Princesses are Lottie LeClaire, Vera Earle and Bernice Brown.

"The pageant is so arranged that the grand entry becomes a part of it, and the blare of the tropical instruments and the weird chants of the jungle savages had no sooner ended than the performance proper was on. So sudden was

the transition from Jungleland to the modern circus that the audience scarcely realized that the spectacle was ended.

"Twenty-five minutes are required for 'Alice in Jungleland'—and the remainder of the 110 acts are crowded into an hour and a half. Two stages and a big steel arena in addition to the rings are kept constantly filled with wild and domestic animals in startling and amusing feats.

"Dividing honors with the spectacle is another of Mr. Barnes' original offerings—the '40 dancing horses and 40 dancing girls.' A complete circle facing the audience from all directions is made around the hippodrome track in presenting this unusual novelty.

"Standing out above all the animal acts is the one offered by Mabel Stark, who puts a large group of tigers through a series of amazing feats, ending with her remarkable wrestling bout with 'Rajah,' the Bengal beauty.

"'Lotus,' the monster hippopotamus, which Mr. Barnes has personally trained, won much attention in its walk around the arena and with its 'shimmy' dance. Cheerful Gardner has an all new elephant act with the group playing the largest musical instruments ever built. His U.S. Navy idea is cleverly worked out, and won an ovation for the elephant wizard.

"Martha La Verne, with the pumas; Martha Florine, with the lions; and Pearl Hamilton, with the leopards, have all added new stunts this year. Captain Ricardo fights twelve large lions and ends by sending them jumping over the hurdles.

"Austin B. King has the zebras, that everyone said could not be trained, showing the intelligence of ponies and working almost as willingly, while his namesake, A.C. King, has the big bear act in the best shape it ever has been. Captain Daniel Williams works the famous Barnes' sea lions.

"The dogs, goats, pigs and monkeys, which were sent to high school under Major Robert Thornton during the winter months, show that they acquired a worthwhile education and delight all with their novel offerings. In presenting them Mr. Thornton is assisted by Ova Ashworth, Elizabeth McCarthy, Dot Whitney, Cleo Dalton, and Mary Kimball.

"The program, which is too lengthy to permit each act being reviewed at this time, ends with a fox hunt that is carefully staged according to the most approved sporting standards.

"Edward Woeckener's Challenge 50-Piece Band is already playing in mid-season form, and the veteran Barnes' leader, though young in years, declares that he has never had a more capable bunch of musicians. Bert Rickman, the silver tongued orator, announced all the acts in his customary pleasing manner. Major Robert Thornton is again Eques-

trian Director, and his whistle keeps the acts speeded up.

"Red Horse Mike" Brahn's Wild West Company provides the concert, and the array of male and female bronc riders is so convincing when lined up for the announcement that the after show has been doing a phenomenal business.

"Many additions have been made to the already high-class menagerie. Recent shipments from abroad consisted of apes, snakes, tigers and lions and they are all shown in bright new dens. 'Mr. and Mrs. Tarzan' are two of the largest specimens of the ape family ever brought to this country. Their keeper is Sam Patton.

"The Side-Show is under the management of John R. Fowler. Mr. Fowler was instructed by Mr. Barnes to get the best attractions possible, and he has succeeded in framing up a show that is new from the banners to the minstrel show. Among the platform offerings are: Humphrey's Georgia Minstrels—a company of 20; Lorraine Bouleware and her big snakes—one being twenty feet long and another nineteen feet; Colonel Ludwig, world's smallest man; Madam Grace Gilbert, bearded lady; Paul Desmuke, armless wonder; King and Prince, boxing midgets; Fritz La Cardo, sword swallower; Avon, fat girl; Elsie, tattooed woman; Pompey Baio, performing cockatoos; Mary Brown, skeleton lady; Amelia Barr, homely woman who challenges the world; Al Frosso, Punch and Judy; Mlle. Sprague and her classical posing girls. Al Frosso is inside lecturer for Mr. Fowler, with Edwin Schaffer, Forrest Sprague and L.E. Colvin, ticket sellers. The tickets are taken by Dominick Rutello and Al Baldwin.

"Only a few minor changes have been made in the staff of the big show. As in the past Al Sands is Mr. Barnes' manager and right hand man. Alfred Wolf is auditor and J.C. Prinz, treasurer. W.K. Peck, traffic manager is temporarily with the show in an advisory capacity. R.F. Schiller is general superintendent; Jack King is supt. of canvas, with Diamond Smith, C.A. Bellis and Jack Smith as assistants. Frank Rooney has



Rhino Tableau with an 8 horse on the Al G. Barnes lot about 1921. Pfening Archives.

the stock with William 'Blackie' Wallace and R. Duvall as assistants. Elmer Lingo, master of transportation, with Paul Barton, train master, and Curley Connors, assistant. Frank Wheatley is in charge of 'props,' Jack Glasson, supt. of the mechanical department; Jean Graufogel, paint department; Wm. P. Saunders, lights; and Mrs. Howard, wardrobe.

"The front door is in charge of Malcolm Pennock, Earle Whitney and Edgar Owens, with W.K. Peck keeping a watchful eye over proceedings. 'Nig' Daubert is back again after several seasons' absence and is handling the seats and concert tickets. G.W. Wise has the cookhouse, with George Reinhardt as assistant. George Davis is looking after the candy stands with the assistance of 'Babe' Collins, Dora Hanna, cashier, and sixteen butchers. Cheerful Gardner again has complete charge of the menagerie, with thirty helpers. Among his assistants are Eddie Trees, Tom Bevin, Joe McIntyre, Jack Cavanaugh, Al Dean, and Allen Hauser. Most of

Spec girls in front of the Three Oval Mirror tableau on the Al G. Barnes lot about 1921. Pfening Archives.



these also work acts in the big show.

"Charles Bouleware has the ticket wagon, with A.G. Giles, assistant. 'Dusty' Rhodes and H.A. Adams are the 24-hour men.

"In clown alley are: Rube Dalkey, Jack Harris, Bill Tate, Curley Phillips, 'Bones' Hartzell, Dutch Marco, Drew Stanfield, Bert Leo, Charles Fortune, Lewis Bartell, Cecil Denny, Jerry Conklin, Ed Bohns, George Wilson, Harry Marcus, Eddie Saunders, Billy Rodgers, Charley Freeman, Joseph Babcock, and Wally Reno.

"The girls taking part in the dancing horse and dancing girl act include: Marjorie Marlow, Elizabeth McCarthy, Ova Ashworth, Rita Buccanon, Ruth Wolfe, Dot Whitney, Billie Le Barron, Alice Brahn, Elva Smith, Mlle. Peralita, Cleo Dalton, Grace Bartlett, Marce Baudet, Rosa Zane, Cleo Parcelles, Alma Patterson, Mary Kimball, Lucille Hargraves, Lillian Wiley, Ann Erskine, Le Claire Giles, Gertrude Holmes, Stella Powers, Lottie Ainsworth, Olive Leeds, Claire Melnotte, Pearl Hamilton, Phoebe Hodson, Cad Reynolds, Georgia White, Evelyn Hill, Gladys Wilson, Edna Davidson, Flora Swafford, Peggy Buell, Harriet Norton, and Lucille Price. All of these young women are also among the 125 girls making up the ballet in 'Alice in Jungland.'

"Forming 'Wild Horse Mike's' Congress of Rough Riders are: Alice Brahn, fancy rider; Tillie Giller, roper; Drew and Marjorie Stanfield, trick riders; Gordon Jones, fancy roper; Ed Bowman and Jack Lindell, broncho riders; Jack Cavanaugh, fancy rope spinner; 'Rube' Dalroy, wild west clown. The famous outlaw broncho, 'Moving Pictures,' is featured.

"Murray A. Pennock, general agent, is directing the tour, with Charles A. Pheeney, contracting agent; Frank A. Cassidy and Thomas Francis Heeney, press agents in advance; 'Duke' Moerschell and J.C. Fletcher, special agents; W.J. Erickson, Mgr. Car No. 1; Frank Garrigus, Mgr. Car No. 2. 'Skinny' Dawson is handling press back with the show."

After the Pomona opening the

Barnes' show made stands at Riverside, Brawley, Calexico and El Centro before arriving in San Diego for a single day on the 14th of March. It then added five dates in the general vicinity of Los Angeles before playing that large city for six days. *Billboard* reported in a short article dated 20 March: "The Al G. Barnes' Circus closed a six day's engagement here tonight to the biggest week's business in the history of the show. Every matinee was capacity and the night performances were turnaways."

From Los Angeles the show made a short run to San Fernando for a day and then rolled over the mountains to Bakersfield. Six towns were played in the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley and the circus reached Fresno on the 4th of April. Before its three-day stand in Oakland it added Modesto, Sacramento and Stockton. Oakland was played April 8-10. On the second day in that city the Al G. Barnes' Circus gave four performances — two matinees and two more performances in the evening. So popular was the circus in the Bay Area that many San Franciscans journeyed across the bay to catch it in Oakland.

The show was reviewed in Los Angeles and San Francisco papers which for the most part repeated the Pomona report. As usual Mabel Stark, Martha Florine, Cheerful Gardner, Edward Woeckener, Captain Ricardo, and Austin King with the zebras were given extensive coverage. Others mentioned were Vera Venable (pumas), Pearl Hamilton (leopards), Capt. Daniel Williams (sea lions), and Austin C. King (bears). Among the professionals who were not wild animal trainers, Bessie Harvey, was adequately reported while a new clown, Jack Klippel, joined the show in Oakland.

The Los Angeles reviewer mentioned that three parades through the downtown streets were given during the week that the Barnes' Show spent in the city. This report also mentioned that "Mr. and Mrs. Tarzan, the big gorilla and orang-utan," attracted much attention in the menagerie. One of these animals may have been an orang-utan but certainly there was no gorilla on the show. Both animals were possibly large chimpanzees.

Also from Los Angeles on 30 March came a report of the circus-carnival stands in that area. Possibly the first to appear in the vicinity was Henry's Dog and Pony Show. It played a number of lots close to the city and then moved on to the San Joaquin Valley. Coming in next was the Wortham Shows which erected its canvas and equipment at Praeger Park. This report also mentioned the Campbell Bros. two-car show and Roscoe & Hockwald's Georgia Minstrels which were either in the area or in the city. Of course, the Barnes' Circus was included as well as the Howe's

Great London dates on April 11-12.

Not until mid-April did the report of the poisoned lion on the Howe's Show hit the headlines. It was reported that "a half-dozen big Nubian lions had succumbed to the death potion, although officials of the circus are said to be jealously guarding the details of its losses." The report concluded: "One theory, said to have gained strength in the South, is that the poisoning was due to the attempt of a disgruntled employee, who is alleged to have been 'red-lighted.'" Jerry Mugivan attempted to replace the lost animals by a purchase from the Selig Zoo. Whether this effort was successful or not is unknown. The Howe's program listed for early in the season (see Joseph T. Bradbury's fine article concerning the Howe's show in *Bandwagon*, September-October, 1964) lists dancing lions worked by Mrs. Guilfoyle in Display No. 8 and four riding lions worked by Louis Roth in Display No. 24. Leopards, pumas, and Bengal tigers used in various acts were not affected by the suffocation.

Still another report from San Francisco at this time gave great credit to John R. Fowler for ably presenting a superior side-show. It mentioned that he capably filled the shoes of the recently departed Bobby Fountain. Fowler's attractions were: Colonel Ludwig, the famous Swiss midget; King and Prince, boxing midgets; Al Flosso, talented magician and lecturer; the Georgia Minstrels; Jolly Avon, fat lady; Mary Brown, human skeleton; Amelia Barr, world's homeliest woman; Mme. Grace Gilbert, bearded lady; Pompey Baio's trained cockatoos; Siada, "The Girl With the Diamond Teeth," a sensational dancer; Mme. Burlilian, tattooed woman; Princess Lorraini, Oriental Dancer; and Thaddeus Glass, fire eater. It will be noted that several of these attractions had been presented by Bobby Fountain in earlier years.

During the middle of April, in Las Vegas, Nevada, Al G. Barnes (Alpheus P.B. Stonehouse) received a decree of

AI G. Barnes backyard scene at Elkhart, Indiana. Date is probably July 21, 1920. At left is No. 64, Three Panel Painting tableau. Pfening Archives.



The Mighty Tusko acquired in 1921 was one of the all time great features of the Al G. Barnes show. This photo was taken of the huge elephant at the Barnes City (Culver City), Calif. quarters and was used for publicity purposes. This particular layout was on a post card and was probably sold on the show. Pfening Archives.

divorce from Dolly Stonehouse. Within the hour, Al G. married Jane Hartigan, a circus rider, who had figured as a witness and accuser against him in several court actions in Los Angeles. It was reported that he had settled with his former wife to the amount of \$100,000.

At the conclusion of the five-day San Francisco stand on 17 April the Al G. Barnes' Circus moved through northern California towns toward Klamath Falls, Oregon, where it was to play on 2 May. In the last days of April, *Billboard* reported that the show had "set a new record for 'flashes' in billing that has seldom been equaled" in that Oregon town. This was accomplished by "tacking 586 sheets of fiber paper to the side of a brickwall located directly opposite the famous White Pelican Hotel on the



main street leading from the city proper to the depot. The task was accomplished by Duke Mitchell's brigade. Also, the men from Bill Erickson's Advertising Car No. 1 stopped in and posted 340 sheets on the rear of the base ball park grandstand and a fence in the center of the city. Frank Garrigus and the No. 2 car were scheduled to arrive later. More than 3,000 sheets have been daubed and tacked in the city limits, and more than 1,000 sheets of lithographs are on display." The article also stated that this was an opposition stand, but it was not known what the contending amusement business was. The Howe's show had swung east to Nevada after its Colfax, California, date on 5 May and did not follow the Barnes' Show into the Northwest.

In its 7 May issue the *Billboard* carried a full, two-page spread devoted to the Al G. Barnes' Circus. The staff was listed and it also included the names of the following personnel: Captain Daniel Williams, successor to Capt. Stonewall's Famous Seal Act; Mabel Stark, Still Working Her Fourteen Tigers—ninth season; Glen "Bones" Hartzell, Producing Original Clown Numbers; Bessie Harvey, Featured Prima Donna of the Al G. Barnes' Circus; Ed Woeckener, Musical Director—nine years; Cheerful and Mabel Gardner, Elephants; Bernice Brown, Posing Horses and Riding Menage; Grace Marvel, Steam Calliope and Riding Menage—Seasons 1915-1921; Jack Harris, original Clown Policeman—14 years with Sells-Floto; Jean B. Graufogel, Scenic Artist—Fourth season; Red and Grace Bartlett, Formerly of the Aerial Team of Bartlett and Allen; Now in Clown Alley—Grace Bartlett working the bulls and Aerial Pony Act for Cheerful Gardner; Ruth Wolff, Riding Menage; Monte George Nelford, Producing feature clown numbers with the Al G. Barnes' Circus—seasons 1917-1921; Charles Fortune, Late of the Fortune Brothers Comedy Bar Act—at present in clown alley; Cecil Denny, one of the joey's in clown alley; Al Dean, working domestic animal acts.

Many of the attractions in both side shows were also listed in this advertisement but, since they have been listed

above, the names will not be repeated here. There may have been several changes in the side show personnel about this time since in the next issue of *Billboard* there appeared this notice: "Wanted for Side Show of Al G. Barnes' Circus—Band Leader and a few Musicians. Also other useful Side Show People. Wire or write to John R. Fowler, Manager, Al G. Barnes' Circus as per route."

From Klamath Falls the show returned to Montague, Calif., for a one-day stand and then began its usual tour of the Willamette Valley in Oregon. Four towns were made before the show entered Portland for a two-day stand. From that city the show began its tour of Washington. It played six cities before reaching its three-day stand in Seattle. Meanwhile, Al G., in his private car, left the circus several days before its arrival in Seattle and checked into the Columbus Sanitarium (in that city) for an operation to correct a throat problem. During the stand Mabel Stark was married and Bert Pepper, animal trainer with the show, was severely bitten by a camel. Somehow the beast grabbed him by the leg and he was out of action for several weeks.

On the 4th of June another want advertisement appeared in the popular trade paper. It stated: "WANTED for Al G. Barnes' Circus—Two Real Lithographers and 3 or 4 Fast Bannermen. Remember, you get your meal allowance money in your hand each morning and eight weeks longer season than with any other show." This carried the name of Murray A. Pennock, General Agent, at the Palmer House, Chicago.

After its Seattle date the show played Bellingham and then went to Vancouver, B.C. for two days with three performances given on one of these days. It then moved back to Washington for a succession of four additional towns in the state and eight more in Montana. It

Newly discovered and very rare photo showing an air calliope wagon with drummer and horn player atop in the Al G. Barnes parade at Maquoketa, Iowa, August 20, 1917. The calliope is followed by a line of cage wagons. Pfening Archives.



was during these weeks that the Howe's Show moved in ahead of the Al G. Barnes' Circus. The Mugivan-Bowers outfit had departed California, and after two stands in Nevada, went into Idaho for several dates. It entered Canada at Cranbrook, B.C., on 23 May. The Barnes's Show moved into the northern neighbor at Lethbridge, Alberta, on 6 June. The Howe's Great London Circus had played that city on 25 May, and continued to make stands about ten to twelve days ahead of the Barnes' outfit as far east as Fort Francis, Ontario. At that town, at the conclusion of its 16 June date, it returned to the United States. Barnes, however, did not reach Fort Francis until the 27th of the month. Both shows made their first stand after their Canadian tours at Virginia, Minnesota.

The Barnes' Circus met with disaster at its Saskatoon stand (13 June) and in Regina (14 June) when powerful wind storms wrecked the big top, and other canvas, at the evening performances in both cities. It was reported that "huge property loss was caused by the storms which swept Saskatchewan and the circus suffered its share of damage." In Saskatoon the tent was crowded when the winds hit the canvas and uprooted the center poles. Performing animals, including ten lions in the steel arena, became excited and the crowd was ordered to evacuate quickly. The top was badly torn, but did not collapse, and no person was injured. There was a repetition the next night at Regina when the large audience stampeded out of the wind-rocked tent in a panic.

From Edmonton the *Billboard* correspondent made an interesting report. The writer sat with two Indians from the north who had been hired to lead a party to the newly discovered oil fields. The two men had never seen a horse or barnyard animals. The reporter stated: "They were greatly impressed by the camels, elephants, lions, etc., but were most astounded by the work of the dogs and bears, animals with which they were familiar."

From Virginia, Minnesota, the Barnes' Show made five stands before reaching Minneapolis, and that two-day date was one of the most important events in the whole history of the Al G. Barnes' Circus. The date was 5-6 July and it marked the arrival of the huge male elephant, Ned, on the Barnes' Show. As the *Billboard* reported: "A monster elephant was added to the Barnes' Circus when the show appeared in Minneapolis recently. The bull is claimed to out-jumbo Jumbo, both in height and weight. The monster has been named Tusko."

Billboard carried a photo of Tusko and Mena taken while both were on the M.L. Clark Show in its 16 July issue. In this picture the big Asiatic male looks great with his long tusks and no chains draped in confusion over his body. The



comparison between Tusko and Jumbo was included in most newspaper accounts of the show for the rest of the year. The big Asian was usually billed as "a foot and a half taller than Jumbo and outweighs him by nearly two tons." Certainly Tusko the tallest and heaviest (and probably the oldest) elephant on the Al G. Barnes' Circus. This pachyderm, known as Ned for years, first appeared as the property of William Smith in 1900. He had been purchased from Bartels in New York City. Ned was on the Smith show for a couple of years and then was sold to the M.L. Clark Circus. He was about five or six years old at this time according to most reports. The big beast remained on the Clark show, still bearing the name Ned, until he arrived on the Al G. Barnes' circus where his name was changed to Tusko. During the year 1921 he was always kept in the menagerie and never used in parade or in the performance. The Barnes' advertising told the patrons that they must travel to the show to see him since his great height did not allow the animal to walk the streets of the city due to power cables and telephone lines overhead. The several photos of Ned on the Clark Show do not indicate any sign of the mass of heavy chains that he later bore on the Barnes' Circus. To this writer's knowledge Tusko never killed or seriously injured any person. True, he did walk off the lot on occasion and took lonesome travels into the hinterland but, except for these occasions, it appears that he was quite tractable for a male elephant.

With this acquisition by mid-1921 the Barnes' elephant herd consisted of eight animals—Ruth, Jewel, Babe, Pearl, Barney, Vance, Jenny and Tusko. All were of the Asiatic species and included three males and five females.

After playing Mankato, Rochester and Winona, Minnesota, the Barnes' Show went into Wisconsin for ten stands. These began at LaCrosse on 11 July and were completed at Green Bay on the 20th. Milwaukee was a two-day date. After two days in Michigan the show returned to Wisconsin for five more days.

At Oshkosh, on 26 July, Barnes and

This view of a side show opening was taken by Karl K. Knecht during the 1920 stand of the Barnes show in Evansville, Ind. Circus World Museum Collection.

the Sells-Floto Circus day and dated. In fact, they played within two blocks of each other to the amusement and delight of the patrons. Earlier this Mugivan and Bowers show had played Canada and returned to the states at Detroit, Michigan, on 16 July. The routes of the two shows crossed in Wisconsin with both making Oshkosh on the same day. Meanwhile, the Howe's Great London Show had toured south, to the west of the Barnes's Show, in Iowa but pulled into Illinois ahead of the wild animal show.

This was the fourth time that Barnes had played Oshkosh in the past six years and, according to a show official, the gross was twice that of any previous visit. The admission price to the Al G. Barnes' Circus was eighty-five cents with the war tax included, while Sells-Floto charged seventy-five cents, also including the war tax. It is interesting that the war tax was still being charged, but apparently it could now be included with the cost of admission and not charged separately. A report by a resident of the city who was familiar with circus practices stated: "About the business, would say that Barnes' Circus had two packed houses and turned people away at the matinee. Barnes also had a very clean parade. Sells-Floto had a good attendance—one packed house

Al G. Barnes elephants in parade at Little Rock, Ark. Shown from front to rear in line are Jewel, Pearl, Babe, Jenny, and Ruth,

and the other better than three-quarters sold out. Their performance was also excellent and the public was pleased.

A second *Billboard* reporter sent the following: "Barnes booked the town first and billed it also. A week later Sells-Floto came and booked and billed the town for the same date. Sells-Floto had the best location, but Barnes beat them out in attendance. Both shows did well, and both gave fine street parades. The shows were but two short blocks apart."

The *Billboard* report continued: "The opposition, so far as the executives of the two shows were concerned, was of a friendly nature, judging by the fact that following the matinee performance Mr. and Mrs. Barnes and Mr. Pennock were entertained at dinner in the cook-house of the Sells-Floto Show by Jerry Mugivan, Bert Bowers, Ed Ballard, Zack Terrell and Ed C. Warner of the opposition forces."

The next day at Fond du Lac, the Barnes' show had to deposit a cash bond of \$1000 to either effect a settlement or stand a lawsuit for damages sustained by the R.B. Anger and Sons Company for the destruction of its sidewalk clock which was tipped over by a passing circus wagon. After attempts to reach an amicable settlement had failed, the company had attached the gate receipts of the circus. The deposit of the bond resulted from the dispute. The Barnes' Circus blamed the destruction of the clock on the Sells-Floto Show to no avail.

The Daily Northwestern reported "that wagon No. 9 of the Barnes' Show was moving southward on the west side of Main Street. At that time a truck of the Sells-Floto Circus, hauling several wagons, came on to Main Street from the west and crowded the horse-drawn Barnes' wagon close to the curb." It was also stated that when the truck sounded its horn, the Barnes' team shied away and caused the wagon to strike the clock and tip it over. The above incident apparently occurred in Oshkosh but the Anger Co. did not succeed in attaching the show until the next day.

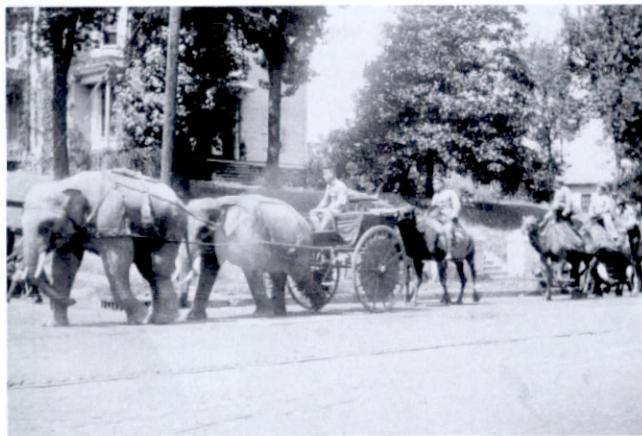
As mentioned earlier, the Howe's Great London Circus moved in ahead of the Barnes' Show in Illinois. They

followed by Vance and Barney hitched to a cart. Date of this photo is uncertain but is either 1920 or 1922. Pfening Archives.



played Bloomington on the 27th of July and Al G.'s organization reached that town on 4 August. The Mugivan and Bowers show was in Logansport, Indiana, on 1 August with Barnes coming into that town on the 10th of the month. Howe's played Cincinnati on August 8-9 and the Barnes' Show arrived there on 15-16 August. From that point the Great London Show moved into Kentucky while Barnes was a week behind it for a few days in that state. Following that clash the Mugivan and Bowers show returned to Ohio and an eastern route while Barnes went west into Missouri.

During the parade in Aurora, Ill., on August 1, Mabel Stark was riding in a two-section cage with three of her tigers. A Bengal was in the section with the trainer while two Siberian cats were in the other section. The door between the sections jarred open and one of the Siberian tigers and the Bengal became involved in a brawl. Mabel drove the fighting animals into one compartment and let them fight while she rode serenely along the route.



Vance and Barney, young male elephants, hitched to a cart and followed by camels in the Al G. Barnes parade at Little Rock, Ark., 1920 or 1922. Pfening Archives.

The Al G. Barnes' Circus arrived in Cincinnati on Sunday morning, 14 August, for its engagement at Cumminsville on Monday and at Norwood on Tuesday. The *Billboard* stated that "immediately upon reaching the location for the first stand, operations for the erection of the necessary tents for the housing of the menagerie, stock, dressing rooms, eating departments, etc., began, and soon, without the least untoward excitement or noise of any nature, this work was completed. At five o'clock sharp the 'flag' was raised over the dining tent.

"On the 'clowns' table,' as an example, one saw tidy linen, and down the center twelve or fifteen polished glass containers filled with a tempting variety of delicacies. First, a half a cantalope

and whole tomato was served, then 'orders' were taken, and after serving it was noted that at each of the ten plates there was a goodly portion of chicken fricassee, mashed potatoes, cream gravy, stewed peas and other vegetables, with either coffee, iced tea or sweet milk as beverage, and ice cream was provided for those who wished it. The other tables in that particular end of the large tent presented the same tasty spectacle, while those of the working departments were bedecked with but little less attention."

The reporter continued: "The big elephant, Tusko, was the center of attraction when Cheerful Gardner brought the large fellow from the menagerie for a quick 'once-over.' [Possibly this display was for the benefit of the press.]

"During Sunday all the many animal cages and parade paraphernalia were carefully washed and prepared for the 12-mile street pageant scheduled to leave the lot on Monday at 8:30 and traverse the principal streets by a circuitous route through the Queen city," the report concluded.



On the 27th of August the same show paper carried a glowing report of the performances in Norwood and Cumminsville. The headlines blared "BARNES' CIRCUS BREAKS RECORD IN CINCINNATI. Six Performances Given at Two-Day Stand in Queen City—Immense Crowds Highly Commend show—Many Prominent Visitors." The text continued: "The Al G. Barnes' Wild Animal Circus, whose record this season has probably never been surpassed by any similar organization, set a new record when it visited Cincinnati and Norwood, Ohio (the latter adjoining Cincinnati), August 15 and 16, and played six performances in two consecutive days, this in the face of the fact that the city was apparently 'fed up' on circuses, having been visited by several this season, and by one just a week before the Barnes' date.

"Both afternoon shows were capacity. At the first night show it was necessary to seat many along the hippodrome track so great were the crowds.

and for each of the second night shows the big top was more than half filled. The side shows also did a wonderful business at both stands.

"Speaking of the Cumminsville performance the *Cincinnati Enquirer* said: 'An extra performance of the circus was given at Cumminsville to accommodate the throngs of spectators on the grounds. It was estimated that more than 20,000 people attended the afternoon and night performances.' And the *Commercial Tribune* had this to say: 'For the first time since this show has exhibited east of the Mississippi River, the Barnes' Circus was forced to give three performances. It was stated that the people of this town were "fed up" on circuses, but 15,000 of the city's young and old journeyed to the big top and were thrilled by one of the best performances that has visited the Queen City in the past five years.'

The *Billboard* report continued: "The Barnes' Show is without doubt the largest animal circus on the road today and its novelty, the high class, clean-cut performance and its splendid personnel

Al G. Barnes street parade at Little Rock, Ark., 1920 or 1922. A portion of the Rhino Tableau is shown at left and followed by a tandem horse hitch. Pfening Archives.

has won a well deserved place among the leading circuses of the country. From the grand entry to the Uncle Sam finale the show moves with speed and pep. There is no stalling, no tedious waits—there is a 'zip' and go to the entire performance that keeps the interest of the audience at top notch.

"The manner in which the show is 'dressed' also deserves mention. The performers are all splendidly costumed, the trappings of the numerous animals are snappy and clean; even the workmen are fitted out in clean, bright red costumes.

"One of the most indefatigable workers was Thomas 'Skinny' Dawson, whose publicity for the show was truly wonderful, one of his stunts being the securing of a six-column layout of



sketches of the circus on the front page of the *Times-Star*.

Prominent visitors included Mr. and Mrs. John Robinson and family; Ben Austin of the Gentry Show; Jack Hoxie, the moving picture actor; Julius Thompson, the tent man of Cincinnati; William, Andrew and Lincoln Donaldson, of the Donaldson Lithographing Co.; Mr. Lowe of the Erie Lithographing Co.; Jake Posey, ex-boss canvasman, and many others.

"The fairyland spectacle, in which jungle beasts, elephants, and horses in gorgeous trappings, men and women clothed in royal splendor, and bands, playing weird instruments, marched in procession featured the opening of the circus. The pageant is called 'Alice in Jungeland.' Martha Florine plays the part of 'Alice' in the pageant and later shows herself to be a real animal trainer by her work with the lions in the steel arena. Then follow in rapid succession trained wild and domestic animals put through unusual stunts. Some of the big features are: Mable Stark, who wrestles with a Royal Bengal tiger and also, in another act, has ten tigers in the arena posing and leaping. Cheerful Gardner (who also has charge of the menagerie) and the group of elephants including Tusko, said to be the largest elephant in captivity, standing 12 feet 5 inches, eleven inches taller than the famous Jumbo; an elephant and lion performing under the direction of Mable Gardner; Captain Ricardo and his group of Nubian lions, and other entertaining acts.

"Edward A. Woehner furnishes an excellent musical program, Robert Thornton directs the performance, and Bert Rickman does all of the announcing.

Clown police patrol wagon in Al G. Barnes parade, Little Rock, Ark., 1920 or 1922. Pfening Archives.

"The side show, under the management of John R. Fowler, is getting its share of the business and includes among the attractions the following: Al Flosso, magic, punch and lecturer; Swiss Tom Thumb; Grace Gilbert, bearded lady; Mme. Brillant, tattooed woman; Paul Desmuke, armless wonder; Mme. Pompey Baio and her trained cockatoos; May Brown, living skeleton; Jolly Avon, fat girl; Amelia Barr, world's ugliest woman; King and Prince, midget boxers; Lorraine and her big snakes, and a jazz minstrel organization. Bobby Kane is in charge of the pit show."

From Cincinnati the Barnes' show jumped into Kentucky for stands at Lexington, Louisville, and Owensboro. It then returned to Indiana to end the week at Evansville on 20 August. The John Robinson Circus was scheduled for that city on the 27th, but postponed its arrival until 5 September. This made the third Mugivan-Bowers-Ballard show with which the Al G. Barnes' Circus had found opposition during this tour. At Lexington, Ky., the Barnes' show train arrived three hours late but it was only one hour late with the parade and a half-hour tardy with the opening of the afternoon performance. The circus did a turnaway business and the crowds were on the straw at the evening performance.

The clowns with the Barnes' Show at this point of the season were: Austin C.

Pony cart and lady riders in the Al G. Barnes parade at Little Rock, Ark., 1920 or 1922. Pfening Archives.



King (producing clown), Charles Post, Curley Phillips, W.J. Morgan, Drew Stanfield, Melvin Renick, Bill Tate, Bert Leo, Fred Marco, Jack Klipper, Bert Lawrence, Jack Harris, Charles Fortune, Frank Fletcher, and James Lauire.

After the successful Evansville date, the show went into Illinois to play Mt. Vernon, Shelbyville, and Alton. It finished the last three days of the week with three dates in Missouri. Eight additional towns were played in that state concluding with Springfield (5 Sept.) and Joplin (the next day). Two turnaways were recorded at Springfield on Labor Day although it rained all day. Joplin had turnaways at both performances.

The next stand was Fredonia, in Kansas, and at this location, on 8 September, the school board gave the youngsters a holiday and paid for their attendance at the afternoon performance. Nine hundred kids were present.

Tusko attracted a great deal of attention in all the towns and cities although he could only be viewed in the menagerie unless a fan made an early visit to the train to see the big beast unloaded and walked to the lot. The Wild West rider, Mike Brahn, returned to the show in Kansas. He had been in hospital at Danville, Ill., where he had suffered a broken leg when pitched off a bronc in that city on 6 August.

The show made a tour of various Kansas and Oklahoma towns during September and finally settled in for twenty-three consecutive Sooner dates from 28 September to 24 October. During this period Alfred Wolff returned to the show and took his former position as auditor. He had temporarily retired during the summer to take charge of the books at the New Pier in Venice, California. Another reason for being permanently located was the birth of a daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Wolff.

Two incidents worth reporting occurred during the Kansas tour. Near Hiawatha on 17 September a full length rail had been placed across the railroad tracks. Whether this was a deliberate attempt of sabotage or merely carelessness was not determined. At Lawrence, on the 15th of the month, Austin C. King (the clown) and Vera Earle were married and left the show in El Paso, Texas, at the end of October.

From Oklahoma City a newspaper reported: "See Tusko the largest elephant that walks the earth . . . Owing to his massive size, Tusko cannot parade and can be seen only at the circus grounds." Thus, it can be seen that the big animal probably did not parade during the 1921 season as he did in later years.

Stands in five Texas and New Mexico towns ended the month of October and the show moved into Arizona on 2 November. On 5 November, while the circus was playing Nogales, Arizona, its Advance Car No. 1, managed by W.J.

Erickson, closed the season at Paso Robles, Calif. The last stand of the circus in Arizona was on 8 November at Phoenix and then the show made its long Sunday run over the desert to San Bernardino, California. The twilight days of the 1921 tour took the show to Ontario, Pasadena, Oxnard, Santa Barbara, Lompoc, Santa Maria, San Luis Obispo and Paso Robles, all in the Golden State. It closed at this last town on 19 November and made the run south to its quarters at Barnes' Circus City, Palms, California.

35th & Clybourn
Circus Grounds
2 Days Starting
Sat., July 16

Al G. Barnes used this newspaper ad for its stand at Milwaukee, Wis., July 16-17, 1921. Circus World Museum Collection.

On the day that the Barnes' Circus entered California, a suit was filed in the Superior Court in Los Angeles against Al G. Barnes. It asked for an accounting and restitution of funds and was to determine whether or not Al G. had misappropriated some \$210,000 in funds. The complaint was filed by A.L. Sands, staff member and stock holder in the Al G. Barnes' Amusement Company which controlled the circus. It stated that Stonehouse (Barnes) owned 2,440 shares out of the 2,500 outstanding shares of the corporation and that Mr. Barnes completely dominated the affairs of the corporation and controlled the board of directors. While in this position, the suit alleged, that Barnes used part of the funds of the corporation to pay obligations arising out of the divorce proceedings with his former wife, Dollie Barnes—Stonehouse. The result of this suit was not announced in the *Billboard* during the remaining months of the year.

A summary of the season's tour was reported at the end of November. It stated that the circus had traveled a total of 16,845 miles in 1921. The total show days numbered 229 and total performances were 449. Performances



Al G. Barnes featured this act billed as the Riding Four in the early 1920's. It consisted of a leopard, dog, baboon, and bear

missed were: Brawley, Calif., on 10 March due to a late arrival (matinee); Weed, Calif., 1 May, matinee missed on account of snow; Medicine Hat, Alberta, 7 June, matinee on account of strong wind; Iola, Kansas, 12 September, both matinee and night because of rain.

Only one performance was given in San Fernando, Ukiah, and Willits, California; Plains, Montana; Estevan, Saskatchewan; Ignace, Ontario; Sayre, Oklahoma; Clovis and Deming, New Mexico; and Safford, Arizona.

Three performances in one day were given at San Francisco, Calif. (two consecutive days); Portland, Oregon; Vancouver, B.C.; Winnipeg, Manitoba; Cincinnati, Ohio (two consecutive days); and Louisville, Kentucky. Four

Camels followed by the steam calliope in the Al G. Barnes parade at Little Rock, Ark., 1920 or 1922. Pfening Archives.

riding zebras. The late Charles Puck who took this photo said the baboon jumped off just as it was taken. Pfening Archives.

performances in one day were given at Oakland, Calif.

This was a very successful tour for the Al G. Barnes' Circus and definitely placed the show among the leaders in the business. A few notes from quarters appeared in the waning days of the year—a new elephant car was ordered (reportedly because of the size of Tusko); Barnes purchased the animals belonging to Universal Studios; Murray Pennock was made general manager for the 1922 season; and Capt. Albert Stonehouse was placed in charge of the Barnes' ranch.

The writer expresses great thanks to Joseph Bradbury for the wagon information supplied for this 1921 season and for the many other aids in preparing these articles. Also, much appreciation is expressed to Don Francis for his notes and encouragement in seeing this series completed.



THE DEMISE AND DISPOSITION OF THE 1882 W.C. COUP CIRCUS

by John F. Polacsek

William Cameron Coup is best remembered for numerous innovations in the movement of railroad shows, and the creation of the P.T. Barnum Circus. After a few years with Barnum, Coup decided to go out on his own. With a group of financial backers, he put together a show under his own name which began touring in 1878. It was enlarged each year thereafter. His 1882 season, however, was a dramatic railroad ride that began with great expectations and ended in mid-season with disaster.

The 1882 W.C. Coup Monster Show began with the development of a single proprietor — William Cameron Coup — owning the show. On January 25th Coup met with his partners of two previous years, and by mutual consent Coup, W.L. Jukes, George Middleton, Margaret L. Haight, and E.D. Colvin dissolved their partnership.¹ A short time later he sold to his former partners all his interests in the John H. Murray Circus, and concentrated his efforts on the upcoming season.²

Coup and his agents were active in New York City prior to the opening of the tenting season. Coup sold a musical steam chariot, and his agents solicited workers. Prospective applicants for the positions of billposters and general agents could contact J. W. Hamilton in the city. Advertisements were also placed in the *New York Clipper* to entice entertainers who could work as sideshow curiosities, in the concert, and on the candy stands. They were to contact W. D. Hagar the manager of privileges of the show.³

At the show's winter quarters in Augusta, Georgia activities were underway to get the show ready for the coming season. Along with the painting and repair work that was pumping money into the local economy, Henry Barnum, the manager of the show, was working to benefit local charities. Two afternoons a week the menagerie was opened to the public for a small fee, and the money donated to Augusta's charitable institutions.⁴ The menagerie was increased in March when two railroad cars of animals arrived from the North. While the animals were passing through Richmond, Virginia the sea lion died, and there was speculation that it was to be stuffed and added to the museum of the show.⁵

Every attempt was made to bring together the unique and the unusual attractions which might draw the public to the circus. Just before the show opened in April the proprietor pulled

what may be called a "COUP DE TA" — capitalizing on the assassination of President James A. Garfield. The event occurred when a disappointed and mentally deranged office seeker, Charles J. Guiteau shot the President in a Washington D.C. railroad station. The victim lingered in agony for eleven weeks before dying on September 19, 1881. At the trial Guiteau was found guilty of murder, and eventually hanged. This kept Garfield martyrdom in the nation's conscience.



William Cameron Coup was one of America's greatest circusmen. This likeness is from the *New York Clipper*. Albert Conover photo.

In March of 1882 Coup secured some artifacts from Charles J. Guiteau. The *Clipper* chronicled the transaction:

W.C. COUP SECURES GUIEAU'S CLOTHES — The following from the Republican of Washington, D.C. of April 1, will be found self-explanatory: The morbid curiosity of Americans regarding the assassin of Garfield which has been shown by the numberless requests received for his autographs, photographs, locks of his hair and other coveted mementoes, is in a fair way to be satisfied. Yesterday A.H. McCartney, the manager of Coup's New United Monster Shows, visited the jail and concluded negotiations which have been pending since March 20, by which, in payment of \$350 to Guiteau, Mr. McCartney secured from him the suit of clothes worn by him on the fatal 2d of July and the suit he wore

during the trial. The following are copies of the bill of sale and the descriptions of the suits:

W.C. Coup, Proprietor New United Monster Shows, to Charles Guiteau. To suit of clothes marked suit No. 1 and described in the annexed paper. \$250. To suit of clothes marked suit No. 2 and described in the annexed paper. \$100. — \$350. Received payment. CHARLES GUITEAU.

United States Jail, March 31, 1882. SUIT No. 1. TO THE PUBLIC: I hereby certify that the clothes which are described as follows, and marked suit No. 1, I wore on July 2, 1881. I this day sell them to W.C. Coup, proprietor of the New United Monster Shows. The coat is a cut-away single-breasted one, badly torn in the breast by the bullet which Mason fired at me into my cell Sept. 11, 1881. The vest is a single-breasted, and buttons to the throat. The coat, pants and vest are dark and of fine material. They were made by a first-class New York tailor for seventy dollars, and have been somewhat damaged by being worn in jail. CHARLES GUITEAU.

TO THE PUBLIC: I hereby certify that the clothes which are described as follows, and marked No. 2, I wore during my trial for removing James A. Garfield. I this day sell them to W.C. Coup, proprietor of the "New United Monster Show." Dark clothes — coat, pants, and vest — of heavy material. The coat has a cut on the left arm near the elbow, made by Jones' bullet, fired at me when I was in the "van," returning to jail from court in November, 1881. CHARLES GUITEAU.⁶

Coup commissioned a series of six tableaus designed and modeled by Wilson McDonald, Esq., America's foremost sculptor, and John Durkin, Esq., A Graphic Artist of New York City. Guiteau was visited for more than a month in his cell by artists. They took a cast of his head, the dimensions of his body, and even had him pose with his right arm extended, and placed an unloaded pistol in his hand.

The series of realistic and life sized tableaus showed:

1. Guiteau contemplating the assassination.
2. The assassination in the passenger room of the railway station.
3. Jones shooting at Guiteau in the prison van.
4. The departure of the midnight messengers from the White House.

5. Garfield's last look at the ocean at Elberton, Long Branch.

6. The sentence of death with correct portraits of Garfield, Guiteau, Judge Cox, the Jury and Counsel. In addition there were lifelike statues of Garfield and Guiteau.⁷

The 1882 W.C. Coup New United Monster Shows, Menagerie, Aquarium, Hall of Statues, Museum, Automatic Exposition, Three Full Circus Companies, and Great World's Fair opened April 8 in Augusta, Georgia. The actors performed in three regulation size circus rings with a large hippodrome track encompassing them all — four rings of entertainment as Coup counted them. Among the attractions was Loyal, the Human Cannon Ball who was shot out of a mammoth cannon to a trapeze bar. There were the twin Champion Riders — Frank Melville and William Ducrow. The top of the tent was the stage for the lady on the high wire with a bicycle — Mlle Loyale. From the dizzy heights of the tent Mlle Zaola did a terrific head-foremost dive and eagle swoop from the summit of the Amphitheatre. On the ground were Prof. White's Dog Circus and Canine Comedians, Prof. Robert's Brazilian Pony Circus, trained elephants, and an immense marine aquarium with its sea lions, sea leopards, sea elephants, and monsters of the deep.



Balloon races were a feature on the show in 1882. This rare one sheet is part of the collection at the Cincinnati Art Museum.

Outside the big top was a magnificent street parade, and a balloon race. Unless the activity was prevented by severe weather, the two balloons—Jupiter and Venus — were sent up into the clouds. The balloon race winner may have been the first to reach the limit of the rope anchoring the lofty perch to a spot on the lot. As the crowd watched, Madame Estelle St. Clair and Signor Montifori began to perform a series of feats on a swinging trapeze.⁸

From Augusta the show moved by

rail to Atlanta where the parade was lauded for the "bright attractive appearance of the vans, the fresh look of spirited horses, and the lively, healthy animals." A strong wind interferred with the free balloon race, and the weather was so bad that the main canvas was not raised. One commentator stated that the ground acts and the animals were of worthwhile note.⁹ The show blazed a route through Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky and spent a week in St. Louis, Missouri.

In St. Louis the tents were spread at the corner of Nineteenth and Pine Streets on May 1. The performances were under way and a reporter from the *St. Louis Republican* gave a listing of the programme. A grand calvadade in which the entire company participated opened the show with attractive costumes and handsome horses. This was followed by the native Zulus in their war-dance and the throwing of the assegai (a slender javelin or spear); Mons. Drayton then performed a thrilling cannon ball act; a fine principal act by William O'Dell. Miss Louise Boshelle, the finest slack-wire artist in the country, performed blindfolded on a wire sixty feet in the air; and a principal act by Frank Melville as a bareback rider, hurdle and jockey rider. Six clowns including "Oscar" the aesthetic,

chos which gave a military drill in the ring.¹⁰

The Coup Circus rolled on into Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. At Keokuk, Iowa, Coup was interviewed by the local paper, and he expounded on his show. He stated there were great risks involved, the capital investments and the daily expenses alone were so great that "a man who takes a circus and menagerie out has ninety-nine chances of financial failure where he has one of success." There had been some confusion the previous year with three circus rings and a hippodrome all going at once. Accordingly, the circus performance was given in one large ring to better satisfy the crowds in attendance.¹¹ It appears that feature acts performed one at a time, and they overlapped more than one circus ring so the crowd could follow them and be sure that they got their money's worth.

The advertising car of the show experienced trouble while crossing a bridge near Hudson, Wisconsin. The car was damaged and it was necessary to take it to a car barn for repairs. The bill-posters transferred part of the posters and couriers to a box car and arrived in the next town on schedule.¹²

Difficulties also occurred at Stevens Point, Wisconsin where the largest



The 1882 Coup circus carried an aquarium, or at least some type of fish display. Cincinnati Art Museum.

along with Ben Snow and William Holloway brought forth sayings of merit in the rings, while overhead the aerial performers were numerous. Senor Loyal was shot from a sea-coast mortar, and after a thrilling flight through the air, was caught by Miss Eddie Snow, who hung head downwards on a trapeze. Snow was thrown from a catapult, turning four or five times in the air, and alighted on her feet in a net. Mlle. Zaco dove headlong from an altitude of 100 feet and was caught in a net. Mlle. Be Be was called the "The Human Butterfly," as she flew across the vast area of the tent. Prof. White exhibited a fine company of performing dogs, while Mr. Robert White exhibited eight bron-

crowd the show had in Wisconsin was packed under the canvas. A strong whirl-wind happened to pass over the tent and the poles began to dance. The poles were enough off the ground to have the lady equestrian in red and white tights run for the dressing room. She was followed by the clown who forgot his jokes, and many of the circus employees. A large number of the crowd dropped down under the seats, and made their exit under the tent. Fortunately the wind soon passed, and the poles were straightened by the canvas-



men. There were no accidents, and the band struck up a tune as the performance continued.¹³

June found the Monster Show on the lake front in Chicago for a week beginning June 19. The show was to unfold the largest tent ever used in the world if one can believe their advertisements. This immense field of canvas was supposedly supported by 75 center poles, and was proclaimed to be the only one of its kind in existence. This great tent allowed for the three performing rings and a race track forty feet wide around the center. Luxury was also available on this week long stand as 3,000 reserved opera chairs were used. It was a good selling point and one reviewer noted that the comfortably convenient means of seating was an asset to the show. The tent did have one drawback — a pair of field glasses were required to distinguish faces at opposite ends of the canvas.¹⁴

Coup's circus train consisted of 12 flats, 6 stock cars, 1 elephant car, 1 baggage car, 3 coaches, and was split into two sections.¹⁵ From Chicago the route went south through Illinois, and the show then spent the months of July and August in Texas. There is little known of the Texas route, other than it was a great tactical error going into the state before the crops had been harvested. From all indications the tour of Texas was a financial disaster. The crop prospects were never better, but the show arrived too early to reap the advantage.¹⁶

In an effort to get the show back in the black Coup decided to make a long run from the Mississippi River to Detroit, Michigan. The Monster Show began advertising the proposed Michigan route on August 8th, with the next two weeks after Detroit finding the show in the lower peninsula. This plan was recorded in the *Clipper*, where the cost of moving the train was noted. The charge was \$175.00 to jump the 80 miles from Delphi, Indiana to Columbia

Trade cards were used by many 19th century circuses in their advertising. Coup's show was no exception. Author's collection.

City, Indiana, and \$225.00 for the 150 miles from Columbia City to Detroit.¹⁷

The show never made the performance in Delphi, Indiana, for on Sunday morning August 20th it experienced a major disaster. The first section of the show left the yards at Cairo, Illinois with the canvas, baggage wagons, tableaux cars, and a passenger coach carrying the drivers and working men. At Burnsides Hill, about 50 miles north of Cairo the first section was unable to make the hill, and stopped with the intention of doubling. The rear part of the train had just cut loose the circus cars when someone cried "Jump, boys, jump for your lives!" At that moment the second section came crashing into the first and the cars were lifted up and piled upon one another.¹⁸ The passenger coach of the first section was completely demolished killing three wagon drivers and wounding about thirty others. Innumerable miraculous escapes were made from the coach as some eighty men were aboard at the time the engine plowed into it. On the second section there was no loss of life among the performers and the stock did not suffer. The loss of property was reportedly five of the tableaux cars completely destroyed, and the Japanese Car of State. Coup was said to have suffered a loss of \$50,000.¹⁹

The show pulled itself together and made the long run to Detroit, Michigan to re-organize, losing the dates in Delphi and Columbia City. The show rolled into town amid its advertisements that there were no camp followers allowed, nor would any gambling or swindling games be allowed on the grounds. The lot was slowly put together for with the loss of the four and six horse drivers it took much longer to get the show moved from the railroad siding. In addi-

tion there were some thirty injured employees to take care of. The *Detroit Free Press* noted that owing to the smashup it was unlikely that there would be a street parade, but that the promise was given that every feature of the tent show would be performed.²⁰

The two performances that first day in town went off on time in spite of the trouble. The menagerie was still in good condition although the attraction of the Guiteau tableaux suffered in the train wreck. The tableau of the assassination was intact and so was the plaster cast of Guiteau's death mask.²¹ The large pavilion was filled with an enthusiastic crowd who acted more like rational beings rather than the average circus audience. The reasons for this change, according to one reviewer, was that the candy and prize "butchers" were kept outside, and the use of a rope. The hippodrome track created a no-mans-land between acts and the crowd had a tendency to come forward and obstruct the view of those who remained seated. The rope was stretched around and near the inner edge of the seats, and kept the crowd from rushing to the open space in front. This novel crowd control method is still used on circuses.

The performance included the exhibition of strength with cannon balls by Herr Drayton, and the riding of Miss Sallie Marks and Frank Melville. The Gladiator Brothers did a ladder act while Madille Loyale's bicycle act on a single wire in mid-air was sensational. Thrills abounded under the canvas as Madille Zaola did a headlong dive from the top of the tent in a most daring act. The chariot race at the close — eight horses going at breakneck speed around the immense hippodrome — was a sight worth the admission fee.²²

It was a four ring circus under the big top, and there was little to dispute the fact even though they had buried five drivers. The Coup Circus had made it to Detroit and put on a grand exhibition.

The employees of the Coup Circus also put on a performance of their own in the Wayne County Circuit Court that first day in Detroit. A parade of six circus people tramped into the county court house and began actions which spelled the death of the Monster Circus. Writs of attachment were filed August 23 against W.C. Coup by the following individuals:

Wayne County Circuit Court
Detroit, Michigan

Name	Damages	Judgement
Frank Melville	\$1,100.00	\$1,133.44
George Latimer	-0-	484.00
William Ducrow	-0-	804.66
George Loyal	-0-	1,478.75
Morris Broadway		
George Treyser	-0-	504.50
Andrew Haight	12,000.00	7,000.00 ²³

The reasoning behind the employees' action was that the premature Texas routing was financially disastrous.

They wanted some of their money. Coup had been struggling for some time against a combination of business troubles, and the "Coup de Grace" to his circus was coming. Various attachments were issued and the County Sheriff Clippert immediately attached the show, seizing not only the property, but the day's receipts.²⁴

Over the next five days creditors came into court adding to Coup's financial woes.

Name	Damages	Judgement
Harry McCartney	\$12,000.	\$12,000.00
George Farini	-0-	551.62
Luther Crecher	-0-	175.00
Eialsey Ferguson	-0-	1,583.41
Thomas Watson	-0-	275.00
Henry Hodge	-0-	125.00
George Guilford	-0-	310.85
Anthony O. Russell		
Robert J. Morgan	-0-	
James M. Armstrong	-0-	2,798.06
John F. Robinson		
Russell, Morgan & Co.		
Detroit Free Press	-0-	205.36
Charles M. Rousseau	-0-	289.00
Alexander Moore		
William McGuigan	-0-	100.50
Strobridge Lito. Co.	-0-	5,225.50
The Courier Co. of Buffalo, New York	-0-	9,773.05
Samuel Booth		
James Sneddon	-0-	63.66
U.S. Rolling Stock Co.	-0-	2,615.97
Anthony O. Russell	-0-	3,069.63
Robert J. Morgan		
James M. Armstrong		
John F. Robinson		
Russell, Morgan & Co.		
vs.		
James B. Gaylord		
Henry Buckley		
W.C. Coup ²⁵		

The legal battle which stopped the show in its tracks also placed some 80 canvasmen and other laborers in a destitute condition. They had not been paid and the cook house was closed. The Sheriff hired 14 men to take care of the show and the animals until they were disposed of. The men took down the main big top and left the menagerie tent to protect the animals and baggage stock. The hippo alone took the entire time of one man to look after it. The livestock to be cared for were two lions, three elephants, four camels, one tiger, three hyenas, a wagon load of monkeys, and a varied assortment of goats, horned horses, sacred bulls, leopards, porcupines, bears, wolves, birds, etc.²⁶

A half dozen deputies were on the grounds of the show watching the property, and an equal number of watchmen on "account of the thieving propensities of some of the late employees."²⁷ The only article of note reported missing was the costume of the lion performer, which was removed and taken to New York. The Sheriff had a trace on it, and steps were taken to see to its return. The Sheriff allowed the laborers to give a ten-cent exhibition of the menagerie to obtain some money for food and possibly a way to get home. The band went through the streets drumming up business and by the end of the day some \$200.00 was raised to assist the employees.²⁸ It was a strange turn of



THE GREAT WORLD'S FAIR.

Coup had one of circusdom's most bizarre features in 1882 when he exhibited the clothes worn by Charles Guiteau when

he assassinated President James A. Garfield. Original one sheet in the Cincinnati Art Museum.

events for the menagerie exhibition the previous spring was also for charity, assisting those in need.

Most of the performers left town or awaited the outcome of the sale hoping that some financial assistance would be coming their way. The employees who did not have a chance to get home took what jobs were available. A railroad line was hiring and some men spent time working on the Windsor & Essex Center cutoff, while others went to Saginaw, Michigan. Half a dozen of them enlisted in the U.S. Army at the local recruiting station. Also still in Detroit were the victims of the railroad wreck who were engaging lawyers to push their claims against the railroad for damages. To raise funds there was a special show put on at the Merrill Hall consisting of minstrel songs and dances, an exhibition of the Zulus, and other miscellaneous features. The band heralded the event by taking to the streets, and some assistance was noted in the box office.²⁹

While his show was being inventoried for an auction sale as Coup could not pay the judgements against him, he went East to try and gain some financial backing. It was reported that some Detroit capitalists offered him \$20,000 to stay off the wrists and get his show back on the road, but he declined the offer. The circus company had already scattered, and taking the show out again meant a lot of work.

The future of the tented circus was something that Coup liked to expound upon, and a reporter from the *Detroit News* documented some of his thoughts. Coup claimed that other circus men followed and imitated his

ideas. He was the first showman to make use of railroad cars and trains, the first to create a railway advertising car, the first to draw a show from place to place by special train, and the first to use more than one ring. Coup did not mind telling about his new scheme. He wanted to cut many of the needless outside expenses, stay a long time in large cities, reduce the price of admission, and put money into the show.³⁰

One way to cut expenses, Coup suggested, would be to dispose of the large amount of expensive and highly exaggerated printing which showmen were using. The public studied the flaming advertisements, and always expected to see the most fantastic acts such as a giraffe vaulting over a 10 foot fence, an elephant as big as a house, or one horse riding around the ring on another horse's back. He hoped to drop all of this type of advertising and confine his advertising to plain, honest announcements. In addition to cutting out the flamboyant lithographs, Coup also proposed to dispense with the costly and troublesome street parade, although he did admit that it was a sure fire way to fill a circus tent with patrons. It was one way for the public to decide whether or not to go to the show based on what was presented on the streets before their eyes.³¹

Another view that Coup had was to stay in larger towns like Detroit for two weeks or more. Normally the show stayed in large towns like Boston, Chicago, and St. Louis for a week, but he wanted even longer stays. This would allow Coup to give the customers more comfortable seats. He actually tried to

get a long term engagement at the Mechanics Hall in Boston earlier in the season, but was turned down by the managers of the exhibition hall.³² While in large towns the price of admission would be cut to 25¢ and 50¢ for reserved seats. In drawing the crowds an attempt would also be made to buy up a large number of street car tickets and throw them in with the price of admission.³³

Coup was obliged to have a menagerie, even though he did not believe in it at all. He stated that it was cruel to have the animals in closed cages, but the public demanded a traveling menagerie and showmen had to carry one. The 1882 public was becoming unreasonable not being satisfied with two or three or a half dozen elephants; they wanted a herd of 20. They also longed to see an equally large herd of camels or a whole car load of monkeys and baboons. It would be best to have a menagerie worth seeing and not try to overdo any part of it. Instead of multiple animals Coup suggested that money be put into rare animals. The menagerie would be an important feature of the show and could be handled in a more humane and economical manner by making long stands.

Local participation by children was another brainstorm that Coup came up with. He wanted to organize the public school students and have them write compositions on different animals in the collection. In this way Coup hoped to keep an interest in the menagerie and use the rare and exotic animals to good advantage.

The crowd was to be appeased as well as the children, and Coup would not sway from his idea of having a poly-ring system. He insisted that the two outside rings served to amuse the people at the further ends of the tent, who would otherwise become restless and interrupt the performance. The acts going on in the outside rings should be the same. Coup felt that it was not right to have a contortionist in one ring and a Japanese juggler in the other, for people were obliged to look in several directions at the same time. The showman stated that "These are some of my views about the way a show could be run, and there is a fortune in it for the right man who has lots of money and is willing to spend most of it before he educates the people to his way of thinking."³⁴

The circus property was examined and appraised at a fair value. A court ordered sale was forthcoming and the Sheriff was given the job of selling everything pertaining to William C. Coup's Monster United Shows at public auction. The sale was to begin at 10 o'clock on September 17th with Sheriff Clippert, and Deputy-Sheriff Billy Jones (an old circus proprietor) keeping the various lawyers satisfied and the crowd in order. However, questions of priority,

A PERTINENT QUESTION

IS COUP ON HIS LAST LEGS?

THE DEMOCRAT OF ST. JOSEPH, MO., IN ITS ISSUE OF MAY 13, SAYS:

"The hippodrome in Coup's Circus has been abandoned, a number of last year's attractions dismissed, and the best performers have been engaged by rival companies. Coup's practice is to BLACKGUARD and break down his opposition by loud literature, but this year he is in bad shape to defend himself. Two-thirds of his last year's show has been sold to Barnum & Co. and Nathans & Co., and the coming show hasn't **VERY MUCH MORE THAN LAST YEAR'S TENT TO EXHIBIT.**"

"AN OPINION AS IS AN OPINION!"

THE GLOBE-DEMOCRAT, of ST. LOUIS, May 18th, expresses its opinion of Coup's Show. They say: "Coup's Circus is not meeting with the patronage its management would deserve, but its patronage is fully as great as its merits deserve. IT IS TOO INFERIOR A SHOW FOR A CITY LIKE ST. LOUIS."

PERTINENT QUESTION NUMBER 2:

IF COUP'S SHOW IS TOO INFERIOR FOR A CITY LIKE ST. LOUIS, what town or city is it best suited for?

PERTINENT QUESTION NUMBER 3:

IS IT OBTAINING MONEY UNDER FALSE PRETENSES FOR A MANAGER TO ADVERTISE FEATURES HE HAD LAST YEAR AND HAS NOT THIS?

YES
"YOU PAY YOUR MONEY & TAKE YOUR CHOICE"
Sells Brothers' Six Shows Combined,
AT
DES MOINES, IOWA
FRIDAY MAY 19

Coup encountered opposition from the Sells Bros. during May of 1882. This rat bill, issued by the Sells Bros., is a reproduction sold by Roland Butler as an original.

and other legal bugbears were so numerous that the sale was delayed two hours.

At the sale Coup, his treasurer Harry McCartney, and his agent Andrew Haight kept an eye on the proceedings. Mr. Griffin, an ex-coroner, very fittingly wielded the hammer of the auctioneer over the property and the dead hopes of one who had seen a splendid fortune swept away in a breath. The auctioneer's voice proclaimed the hour of doom as he stood on a circus wagon, and had a scribe sitting on the dashboard to record the actions of the day. At that moment a lion at the other end of the tent began to roar protests, but after a short period settled down and the show began.³⁵

Among those in attendance at the Coup auction were: H. K. Long, foreman of the Barnum show; W. L. Treyser, of the Chicago billposting firm of Broadway & Treyser; Mr. Thompson of the Cincinnati tent making company of Thompson & Vandiver; W. L. Jukes and E. D. Colvin of the Nathans and Co.

Circus; George Middleton, representing John O'Brien's Circus Royale; John B. Doris of the Batcheller and Doris Circus; J. H. Kelly representing the Adam Forepaugh Circus; John J. Nathans who held a mortgage on the horses and the elephants; W. W. Cole of the circus of the same name; George W. Orrin of Mexico's Orrin Bros. Shows; C. W. Miller representing the Buffalo Express-Miller Transfer Co.; G. H. Smith representing the Buffalo Sales Stables; E. Vanderlip, a Buffalo liveryman; Frank Thompson of the Cincinnati Zoo; Mr. Wiggins, a sideshow operator; Harry McCartney, the ex-treasurer of the Coup show; Luther Beecher, owner of the lot on which the show was set up; William D. Hagar, ex-manager of the privileges on the Coup show and representative of the United States Rolling Stock Co.; W. P. Taylor, general manager of the Canadian Southern Railroad; H. Piper of the Toronto Zoo; and Henry B. Hodge, William Morgan, and George J. Guilford of the Russell, Morgan Lithograph Company of Cincinnati.³⁶

The sheriff began the auction by proclaiming that the hippo and its cage would be the first items to be put up for bid. The auctioneer made a little speech assuring the crowd that the sale was bona fide, and that everything would be knocked down to the highest bidder. At that moment a deputy stepped forward and opened the hippo's cage and the bidding began. The first offer was for \$1000, and it continued in \$100 increments until it was knocked down by W. W. Cole for \$2900. The next article to go was the menagerie tent and it was purchased by W. P. Taylor. In most cases the animals did not go with the cages, and carpenters were busy making cages to ship the animals to various cities. The first day of the sale continued until late in the afternoon when the sheriff called a halt, and told the crowd it would continue to the next day.³⁷

The second day of the sale saw the animals being crated for transit, and the lowering of the menagerie tent. Coup stood on one side surveying and supervising, giving his last orders like the captain of a sinking vessel. He simply said "Well!" in a tone which meant "But such is life."³⁸ By 10:30 the Sheriff had brought order and the sale proceeded. There were some protests from the crowd as the Sheriff announced that he was going to sell the horses and elephants as one lot. One of the lawyers informed the crowd that a mortgage on the horses and elephants was held by John Nathans to the amount of \$9,902.50.³⁹

What came up for bidding were 69 common horses, ten bronchos, eight ring horses, and three elephants. The bidding came from different quarters of the lot then finally the last bid of \$8,750 was offered by George Case a livery man. His was the final bid which when

added to the mortgage made the total sum paid for the stock \$18,652.50. After this climax a few more items were found, and the last item to go under the hammer was a pony harness.⁴⁰ A fairly complete listing of the auction could be compiled from the pages of the *Detroit Free Press*, and the *Detroit News*. The following is an inventory of the disposition of the W.C. Coup Monster Circus: Hippo, \$2,900, cage included, purchased by W.W. Cole; Menagerie Tent, \$200, included the gasoline chandeliers, tent poles & paraphernalia, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Horned Horse (Gnu), \$625. Cage #3 included, purchased by W.W. Cole; #15, \$105 (held the following items: porcupines, musk hog, and wolves), purchased by W.P. Taylor; 2 Porcupines, \$50, purchased by Zoological Society of Cincinnati; Musk Hog (Peccary), \$11, purchased by H. Piper of Toronto Zoo; Cage #27 (price not disclosed), held a Happy Family of 6 monkeys; Happy Family, \$84, 6 monkeys purchased by Cincinnati Zoo; Cage, \$135 (held 3 sheep), purchased by W.P. Taylor; 3 Sheep (Assyrian), \$15, purchased by W.B. Hayes; Cage, \$160 (held monkeys), purchased by W.P. Taylor; Ring-tail Monkey, \$15, purchased by H. Piper of Toronto Zoo; Dog-faced Monkey, \$35, purchased by W.D. Hagar; 2 Monkeys, \$26, purchased by S.G. & L.M. Ishbach; 3 Guinea Pigs, \$3, purchased by Richard Giff; Cage, \$85 (held birds), purchased by W.P. Taylor; 8 Cockatoos, \$72, purchased by W.D. Hagar; 2 Macaws, \$23, purchased by George Middleton; Lion's cage, \$150, purchased by George Derfn; 1 Leopard & 2 Lions (price not disclosed), purchased by George Derin; Cage, \$105 (held hyenas), purchased by John A. Dennis; 3 Hyenas, \$33, purchased by W.W. Cole; 2 Sun Bears, \$200, purchased by Cincinnati Zoo; Tiger cage, \$175, purchased by H. Piper for Toronto Zoo; 1 Royal Bengal Tiger, \$400, purchased by H. Piper for Toronto Zoo; Cage, \$200 (held Sacred Cow), purchased by W.P. Taylor; Sacred Cow, \$75, purchased by H. Piper for Toronto Zoo; 1 Black Bear, \$10, purchased by W.D. Hagar; Cage, \$90 (held jaguar), purchased by W.P. Habberton; 1 Jaguar, \$35, purchased by Cincinnati Zoo; Bandwagon, \$300, purchased by W.W. Cole; Cage #30, \$100, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Cage #5, \$130 (held kangaroo & emu), purchased by W.P. Taylor; Kangaroo, \$100, purchased by H. Piper for Toronto Zoo; Emu, \$185, purchased by H. Piper for Toronto Zoo; Cage #18, \$120 (held yak), purchased by W.W. Cole; Yak, \$150, purchased by W.W. Cole; Cage #11, \$185, purchased by W.D. Hagar; Ibex, \$35, purchased by H. Piper for Toronto Zoo; Axis Deer, \$25, purchased by Mr. Walters; Ornamented Band Chariot, \$450, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Ticket Wagon, \$350, purchased by W.D. Hagar; Baggage Wagon #66, \$70 (bidder not disclosed);

Steam Organ & Chariot, \$700, purchased by R.J. Morgan; Dressing Tent, \$75, purchaser skipped out of town, resold for \$50, purchased by Mr. Thompson; 41 Lengths of seats, \$3.25 a length, (bidder not disclosed); Reserved Seats, \$7.25 a length, (bidder not disclosed); 13 Tiers, Ordinary Seats, (price and bidder not disclosed); Reserved Seats, 6 lengths, 10 tiers, (price and bidder not disclosed); 46 Gallons of Naphtha, \$16.50, (bidder not disclosed); Baggage Wagon, \$75, purchased by W. Chickering; Balloon Wagon, \$48, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon #42, \$145, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon #40, \$80, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon #40, \$80, (bidder not disclosed); Carpet, \$55, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon, \$50, (bidder not disclosed); Chandeliers, \$40, (bidder not disclosed); Camel Harness, \$20, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon, \$65, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon #52, \$45, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon, \$61, purchased by Mr. Branden; Wagon, \$61, purchased by Mr. Taylor; Wagon, \$62, purchased by Mr. Taylor; Wagon, \$72, purchased by S. Simons; Wagon, \$74, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Wagon, \$80, purchased by Deputy Sheriff Jones; Wagon, \$71, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Tableau Wagon, \$95, purchased by W.D. Hagar; Wagon, \$80, (bidder not disclosed); Main Tent, \$500, purchased by Mr. Thompson; Horse Tent, \$90, purchased by Mr. Brandon; Horse Tent, \$16, (bidder not disclosed); Horse Tent, \$80, purchased by Mr. Baldwin; Buggy, \$25, (bidder not disclosed); the circus train consisted of 7 cars: Open Freight Car, 50 foot length, \$325, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Car #60, \$230, purchased by Harry McCarthy; Car, \$230, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Car, \$295, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Car, \$300, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Car, \$300, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Sleeping Car, \$600, purchased by W.T. Hagan.

This herald, for a May 1882 St. Joseph, Missouri date, promoted the performance, and the achievements of the owner. Pfenning Archives.

A SHOW OF MARVELS

READY! **READY!**

WHAT W. C. COUP HAS DONE

Who has originated more special attractions than any man ever connected with it?

W. C. COUP!

Who first conceived the idea of abandoning the circus ring and built an enormous train of sleeping, palaces, box, platform and tank cars, and put them in motion with a single engine?

W. C. COUP!

Who first planned and organized the Great Monster Shows?

W. C. COUP!

Who erected the largest building ever erected in the world (with the exception of the ancient coliseums for exhibition purposes?)

W. C. COUP!

Who built the immense iron Equestrian statue in the city of New York, where the most elegant riders and acrobats performed over known up to that time?

W. C. COUP!

Who has paid the largest price for novel attractions and larger salaries to performers than any other man in the world?

W. C. COUP!

Who has organized and fitted out the largest and most complete menagerie, the most extensive, most expensive, and Nitro-therapeutic Champion SHOWS OF THE WORLD?

W. C. COUP!

Who has never satisfied with his past efforts but bends every effort to surpass his previous efforts to eclipse all he has already done?

W. C. COUP!

WHEN YOU VISIT MY **VAST UNITED MONSTER SHOWS** YOU WILL SEE PONDEROUS MONSTERS IN MARTIAL MOVEMENT

MY HERD OF ASIATIC AND AFRICAN ELEPHANTS

OKENAWAKA'S TRIBE OF INDIANS

The Great Circus Ring

ORIGINAL ACTS

A GROUP OF GENUINE ZULUS

PRINCESS ROYAL, AMADAGA

ONLY FEMALE ZULUS

DAUGHTER OF KING CETEWAYO

WAR DANCES, THROWING THE ASSESSA

THE GREAT HISTORICAL TABLEAUX

STONE TICKET ADMITS TO ALL

CHAPLAIN

SEE OTHER SIDE

not disclosed); Carpet, \$55, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon, \$50, (bidder not disclosed); Chandeliers, \$40, (bidder not disclosed); Camel Harness, \$20, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon, \$65, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon #52, \$45, (bidder not disclosed); Wagon, \$61, purchased by Mr. Branden; Wagon, \$61, purchased by Mr. Taylor; Wagon, \$62, purchased by Mr. Taylor; Wagon, \$72, purchased by S. Simons; Wagon, \$74, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Wagon, \$80, purchased by Deputy Sheriff Jones; Wagon, \$71, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Tableau Wagon, \$95, purchased by W.D. Hagar; Wagon, \$80, (bidder not disclosed); Main Tent, \$500, purchased by Mr. Thompson; Horse Tent, \$90, purchased by Mr. Brandon; Horse Tent, \$16, (bidder not disclosed); Horse Tent, \$80, purchased by Mr. Baldwin; Buggy, \$25, (bidder not disclosed); the circus train consisted of 7 cars: Open Freight Car, 50 foot length, \$325, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Car #60, \$230, purchased by Harry McCarthy; Car, \$230, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Car, \$295, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Car, \$300, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Car, \$300, purchased by W.P. Taylor; Sleeping Car, \$600, purchased by W.T. Hagan.

Sold as one lot were the following as a mortgage was being held by Mr. Nathan against the livestock and elephants: 69 common horses, 10 bronchos, eight ring-horses, 3 elephants, \$8750 + the mortgage of \$9,902.50 = \$18,652.50, purchased by Mr. George Case, a livery man.

In addition to these major items the following items were also mentioned: Four sets of Roman standing pads and bridles, \$12; Four jockey saddles, \$10; Twelve band suits, \$42; Ten military suits, \$27; Large drum, \$7.50; Poles and bars, \$26; Stake puller, \$6; Four runs and trestles, \$11; Catapult, \$6; Blacksmith's Forge, \$16; Blacksmith's Wagon, \$63; Anvil, \$7.50; Two Screw Jacks, \$7; Two American Stars and Stripes Flags, \$32; Large red bunting with Coup's Advertisement in large letter, \$15, purchased by Mr. Demass who immediately presented it to Mr. Coup. Pony, \$130; Mule, (price not disclosed); Shetland Pony, \$80; Shetland Pony, \$50; Shetland Pony, \$105; Colt, \$50; Mother of Colt, \$110.⁴¹

At the end of the auction Coup stated that he hoped to be on his feet the next season, and that he was not through yet. Unfortunately all of his debts were not settled, and he was hounded by his creditors. In December 1882, his interest in Nathan & Company Circus, consisting of several cages and a tally-ho coach, were sold at a sheriff's auction.⁴²

Bad news was something that Coup had to live with for some time. Not only were his circus assets liquidated at auction, but his court case against the Wabash, St. Louis & Pacific Railroad was overturned. Originally the first Michigan court that heard the case awarded

WAIT FOR NOTHING, WAIT FOR NOBODY! FIRST, BEST AND ONLY SHOW!

Worth Seeing, that will be in Menomonie this Season.

The Great Show of Shows will Positively Exhibit Everything Advertised, in
MENOMONIE, THURSDAY, JUNE 8th, 1882.

Not a Day Later nor a Day Sooner!

Coup's is the Only Show

—WHICH HAS—

A Vast Hippodrome,

—PRESENTING—

HIPPODROME RACES, PONY RACES, ETC.,

With a Half-Mile Track,

—Surrounded by an—

Amphitheater Seating 7,000 People.



Only when Coup Comes, Thursday, June 8th

can you see

3 Great Circuses in one Great Ring.

No. 1—Frank McRile's Great Australia Circus. No. 2—Wm. Darrow's Royal London Circus. No. 3—W. C. Coup's Famous Equestrienne.

ONLY WHEN COUP COMES, THURSDAY, JUNE 8th

Can you see the Grand Historical Tableaux, Five Hundred Statues and Figures Depicting the Assassination of Garfield. Also the Identical Suit of Clothes worn by Guiteau at the Time of the Assassination and these he wore during the trial.

ONLY WHEN COUP COMES, THURSDAY, JUNE 8th

Can you see RE-HE, the Human Butterfly, Madam Hachelle, the Sprite of the Air, and Mina, Loyal, the Human Cannon Ball.

ONLY WHEN COUP COMES, THURSDAY, JUNE 8th

Can you see Prof. John White's Canine Comedians and wonderful Dog Show, and Prof. Robert White's Brazilian Pony Circus, Performing Goats and Leaping Grey Hounds.



Only When Coup Comes, Thursday, June 8th
can you see
The Grandest Street Procession
ever beheld, which "far outshines the wealth of Ormus or of Isfah," and a
Grand Free Balloon Race
with a man and a woman in a trial of skill on the
TRAPEZE in the CLOUDS!
Watch for COUP
TILL THURSDAY, JUNE 8th, FOR THE BEST SHOW AND ONLY
REAL GREAT SHOW THAT WILL BE IN MENOMONIE
THIS SEASON. TWO PERFORMANCES, at 2 and 8 P. M.
Prices as Usual.
For the accommodation of Families, Ladies and Children, and such
as wish to avoid the rush at the ticket wagon, Tickets and Reserved
Seats can be had at O. K. Rounds & Co.'s Drug Store, at a small ad-
vance on the regular price.



damages to Coup, but the railroad appealed the decision and it wound up in the Michigan Supreme Court.

The case was heard in January 1885, and their judgement was that the railroad could not be held for damages because they were transporting a circus! Coup sued the railroad for injuries to cars, equipment, persons, and animals caused by the collision of the two circus trains while in transit through Illinois. Even though the move was paid for in advance the court decided that the railroad was not liable for damages because it was a "special train." In the brief of the case the duty of forwarding the property of others and the responsibility of the railroad was spelled out:



W. C. COUP'S

NEW UNITED MONSTER SHOWS

VAST PARISIAN HIPPODROME,

3 Full Circus Companies

AND TRAVELING WORLD'S FAIR,

Exhausting the World of Novelty and Leaving Nothing to be Seen Afterwards
which will not prove "flat, stale and unprofitable."



Only When Coup Comes, Thursday, June 8th

can you see Frank. Melville, William Darrow, Claude Herbert and Henry Belmont in
their Great Acts of Equestrianism, and

20 LADY RIDERS OF RENOWN! 20

175 One Hundred and Seventy-five General Performers! 175

SIX CLOWNS! 6

Led by "Oscar," the "Athletic" Clown, the Sunflower of Delight, and the too utterly
too-toe Lily of Lilydom!

Only When Coup Comes, Thursday, June 8th

Can you see Mlle. Jeanne, the most Fearless and Graceful Rider in either hemisphere
and the Most Beautiful Woman living.

Only When Coup Comes, Thursday, June 8th

Can you see Coup's Wonderful Trained Bunchos and the Leaping Horse "Nettle,"
The Largest Hippopotamus! A Sea Aquarium!
A vast Automatic Museum!



The W. C. Coup Circus encountered heavy opposition from the Sells Bros. Show in the midwest early in the 1882 season. The two circuses battled it out with full page ads like this one in small town weekly newspapers. Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin.

1. A common carrier's liability does not attach to a railway company that has contracted to move a menagerie in the latter's own cars controlled by its own agents, and though operated by railway employees, run upon a time schedule to suit the menagerie. And a stipulation that the railway company shall not be liable for injuries to the menagerie caused by want of care in thus moving it, may be upheld.

2. A common carrier cannot refuse to carry such property as is generally carried, but it must have the right to carry it on trains made up by itself and running on its own time; it cannot be required to make up special trains on demand or drive such trains made up entirely by other persons, or of their cars.

3. A common carrier's statutory duty to receive the cars of other owners does not oblige it to move them except in their own routine and in the ordinary course of business.⁴³

Thus ended 1882 for W.C. Coup. His show was sold out from under him in Detroit, and he lost the court case because he was running a circus train on its own cars and schedule.

Footnotes

1. *New York Clipper* (hereafter cited as *Clipper*), February 4, 1882.
2. *Clipper*, February 25, 1882.
3. *Clipper*, February 4, 1882.
4. *Clipper*, February 11, 1882.
5. *Clipper*, March 25, 1882.
6. *Clipper*, April 8, 1882.
7. *The Daily Times*, Chattanooga, Tenn., April 9, 1882.
8. *The Daily Times*, April 11, 1882.
9. *The Daily Times*, April 12, 1882.
10. *St. Louis Republican*, St. Louis, Missouri, May 2, 1882.
11. *Keokuk Constitution*, Keokuk, Iowa, May 24, 1882.
12. *The Menomonie Times*, Menomonie, Wisconsin, May 26, 1882.
13. *Stevens Point Journal*, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, June 17, 1882.
14. *The Chicago Inter Ocean*, Chicago, Illinois, June 22, 1882.
15. *Clipper*, July 25, 1882.
16. *Detroit News* (hereafter cited as *News*), Detroit, Michigan, August 25, 1882.
17. *Clipper*, July 25, 1882.
18. *Clipper*, September 2, 1882.
19. *News*, August 21, 1882.
20. *Detroit Free Press* (hereafter cited as *Press*), Detroit, Michigan, August 23, 1882.
21. *Press*, August 24, 1882.
22. *News*, August 24, 1882.
23. *Wayne County (Michigan) Court Record Book 1881-1883*, Abstract of cases.
24. *News*, August 25, 1882.
25. *Wayne County (Michigan) Court Record Book 1881-1883*, Abstract of cases.
26. *News*, August 28, 1882.
27. *Press*, September 6, 1882.
28. *News*, August 28, 1882.
29. *News*, August 31, 1882.
30. *News*, August 30, 1882.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Clipper*, March 11, 1882.
33. *News*, August 30, 1882.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Press*, September 17, 1882.
36. *Ibid.*, and *News*, September 16, 1882.
37. *Press*, September 17, 1882.
38. *Press*, September 20, 1882.
39. *Ibid.*
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Press*, September 17, 19, 20, 1882, and *News*, September 16, 18, 19, 1882.
42. *Clipper*, December 9, 1882.
43. *Michigan State Supreme Court Report*, January Term 1885. PP. 111-116.

CIRCUS WAGON HISTORY FILE

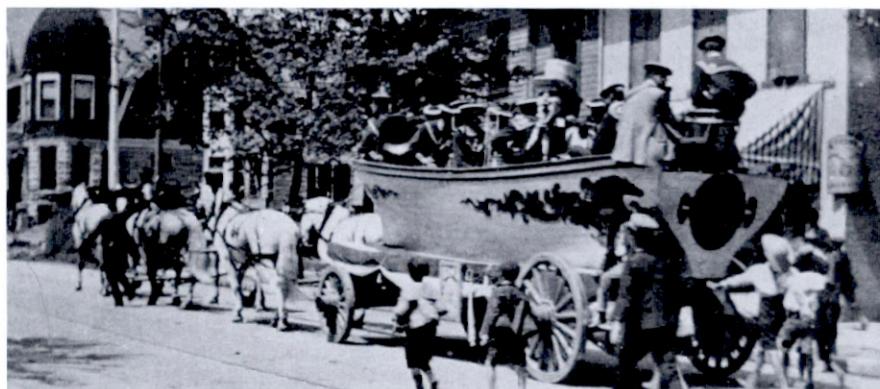
The Forepaugh Globe Float and The Great Wallace Hippo Den

by Fred Dahlinger Jr.

The demise and breakup of a great circus provided lesser showmen with an opportunity to acquire first rate equipment at reduced prices. Today these sales provide a challenge to the investigator unraveling the mysteries surrounding the dispersal of the show's assets, the travels of the parade wagons being of particular interest. Except for three mirror tableaus and two or three floats, the trail of virtually all the Adam Forepaugh circus parade wagons can be traced after the show's 1894 closing. One notable vehicle which did disappear was the globe float, constructed from the carvings which originally comprised the top tableau of the 1878 Fielding built "Gem Bossed Car of Freedom."¹

The Car of Freedom's career as a tall non-telescoping tableau was terminated by a railroad wreck near Downingtown, Pennsylvania on October 22, 1885, when the show was making the home run to Philadelphia winterquarters.² The wagon was split as a result of the wreck, the lower portion being made into a bandwagon, incorrectly named the "Five Graces," and the top tableau into a small float. Shortly thereafter Forepaugh disassembled his St. George and dragon telescoping tableau, converting it into the Lion & Mirror bandwagon and a small float. A carved grotesque mask which had originally been on the box structure holding the globe on the Gem Bossed Car of Freedom was installed as a decorative mudboard on the new St. George float by 1889.³

The earliest known photographs of the Five Graces bandwagon and globe float were taken on May 28, 1887 at Lansing, Michigan.⁴ They show the globe mounted on a rather simple deck with the wheels positioned under the platform. Shots taken at Bridgeport, Connecticut on June 6, 1888 and Minneapolis, Minnesota on August 6,



J.H. LaPearl's boat bandwagon was one of the strangest wagons ever in a circus parade. This view clearly depicts the vehicle's economical construction. Albert Conover Collection.

1889 show the same arrangement.⁵ The globe was involved in a second wreck near Scarsboro, Iowa on September 19, 1889.⁶ The damage incurred in that mishap resulted in the removal of the outer platform and the mounting of the statues on small carved ledges attached to the inner carved platform. During the

reconstruction the positions of the figures were exchanged, the switches evident from photographs taken at Philadelphia winterquarters during the winter of 1889-1890, and two others from Bath, Maine and Reading, Pennsylvania in 1890 or 1892.⁷ The globe float was probably carried through 1893, but the 1894 route book indicates it was not on

This Minneapolis photo, taken on August 6, 1889, also shows the globe and statues in their original configuration. Minnesota Historical Society.





After the 1885 Forepaugh wreck, the globe and statues from the Car of Freedom were mounted on a simple platform.

the abbreviated show in its last year.

It is important to note that the four carved statues were all different, each representing one of the four races of man, in accordance with the "fours" theme of the entire wagon, an interpretation first advanced by Fred Fried in *Artists In Wood* in 1970. Their uniqueness makes their later identification as the corner statues of the Great Wallace hippo den quite secure. The sequence of transfers which caused the globe float statues to pass from the Forepaugh show to Ben Wallace has not been completely rationalized, but by tracing the history of several other circus assets, it is possible to suggest the probable chain of events.

There is no record of any direct dealings between Wallace and the Forepaugh circus, not when Adam Forepaugh was alive nor during the four years that James A. Baily operated the property. It is notable that Wallace generally did not buy used equipment, purchasing new parade wagons when he launched his circus in 1884 and replacing these vehicles with new Sullivan & Eagle products in the 1890's. Knowing that the globe was with the Forepaugh operation through 1893, the chances that Wallace bought the globe directly from Baily are rather remote.

It is believed that two showmen, Leon W. Washburn and J. H. LaPearl, were the parties who participated in the globe wagon's transfer from Forepaugh to Wallace. Washburn was one of the first buyers when Forepaugh began to liquidate his holdings in 1889. The piece of equipment which Washburn purchased that year was the finely carved Ohlsen steam calliope, which had been in the Forepaugh parades as early as 1887.

Operating a circus in some years and a Tom show in others, Washburn sold his menagerie in October 1897 to J. H. LaPearl, a Danville, Illinois showman, who had consistently improved his

shown here at Bridgeport, Connecticut on June 6, 1888. Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin.

show from its inception in 1891.⁸ LaPearl's purchase included a hippo, reportedly the largest in captivity, and two elephants, Charley and Ding Dong.⁹ Washburn offered to sell other wagons and cars by early 1898, so the menagerie transaction probably marks the time at which the globe passed from Washburn to LaPearl. The vehicle does not appear in the 1891-1897 LaPearl composite route book, an omission which is not unexpected since the vehicle would not have arrived on the LaPearl lot until near the end of the season, which came on November 5. Con-

The superior carving of the statues can be appreciated in this view of the rebuilt Forepaugh globe wagon taken at the Philadelphia winterquarters during the winter of 1889-1890, after the second rebuild. The front figures shown here were mounted on the left side of the Wallace hippo den. McCaddon Collection, Princeton University Library, courtesy Albert Conover.

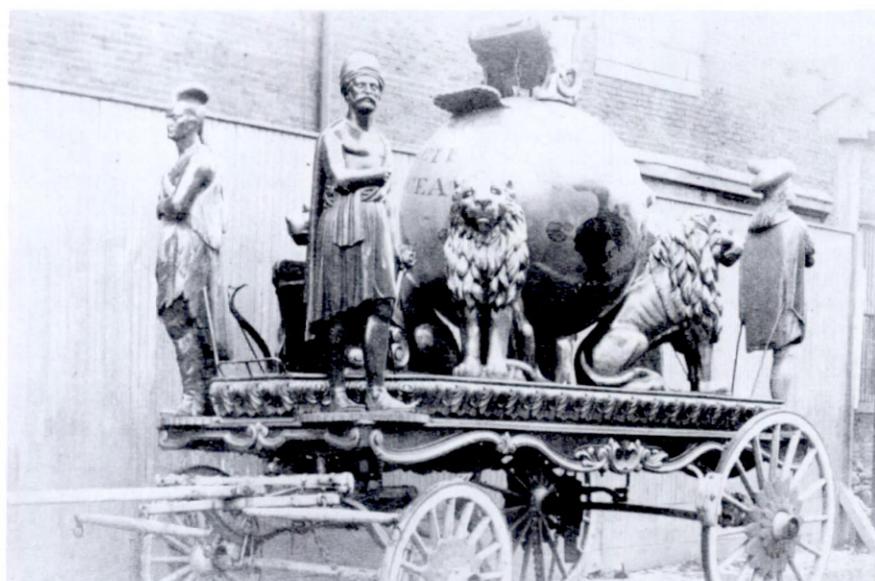
ceivably it is one of the three new tableaus which were on the show according to the March 19, 1898 *New York Clipper*.

By 1899 the LaPearl show was traveling on twenty cars, including at least three stock cars, seven flats, four sleepers and two advance cars. Coming out of Danville, Illinois, the show presented a direct threat to the Great Wallace circus, especially since LaPearl had built a good reputation, in comparison to the heat generated by Wallace's notorious grafting practices.

In late 1897 the LaPearl menagerie included 15 cages and three dens, two elephants and one camel.¹⁰ The big feature of the collection was the ex-Washburn hippo, whose cage was one of the two open dens in the opening day parade in Danville in 1898. The local newspaper noted that while other showmen accumulated a large number of common animals, LaPearl had chosen only the rarer animals for his collection.¹¹ The accuracy of this observation is questionable, as the only truly rare specimen in the menagerie was the hippo, a beast which was coveted by another showman.

It has been alleged that Ben Wallace conspired with a lithographing firm to which LaPearl was indebted, arranging for the foreclosure of the show and its acquisition. The columns of the *Clipper* are silent concerning Wallace's acquisition of the LaPearl show in September 1899. Wallace's route book notes only that Col. Ben returned to his show from Seneca Falls, New York on September 4 or 5 after buying the LaPearl show. On September 7, LaPearl's two bulls, Charley and Ding Dong, the hippo, Big George, and a camel arrived on the Wallace show at Buffalo, the remainder of the LaPearl outfit being dispatched to Wallace's Peru quarters.

Both the Danville and Peru papers carried stories concerning Wallace's



acquisition of the LaPearl circus, it turned out that LaPearl was indebted to the Donaldson Lithographing Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio to the tune of \$12,500. Donaldson also owned the better part of the menagerie and held a chattel mortgage on the remainder of the show. The LaPearls were operating the show under a lease agreement with a rent stipulation. When LaPearl failed to make any rent or mortgage payments for the first four months of the season, Donaldson decided to foreclose. Ben Wallace was apparently waiting in the wings because he and his general agent, William E. Franklin, had inspected the LaPearl show only a few days prior to Donaldson's foreclosure.

The first attempt to seize the show occurred at Seneca Falls, New York on September 1, but was resisted by LaPearl, who reportedly moved the circus out of town by force. Donaldson then traveled to Geneva, New York, hired an attorney and served the necessary papers in Naples, New York at midnight on September 2, after the show had been loaded and was ready to move. Control of the train was assumed by Donaldson, who took it to Geneva, New York.¹²

The Peru *Daily Chronicle* reported that Donaldson had a \$32,000 mortgage claim on the show. Wallace had inside information of the impending foreclosure and was on hand when the officers served the papers. He immediately began negotiations to buy the show and in less than five minutes Donaldson accepted his offer of \$24,000.¹³ Wallace's earlier visit, his inside knowledge, his presence at the seizing, and the quick acceptance of his offer all suggest some prearranged agreement between Donaldson and Wallace. It was probably by this transaction that the ex-Forepaugh globe float came into the possession of Ben Wallace.

Harry Parkhurst, a Wallace bull han-

Number 42 is visible on the front panel of the hippo den, shown here shortly after it was built. Most fine hippo dens had bay



This fine shot shows Big George and his keeper Scottie with the Wallace den at Peru winterquarters in 1901. Note the

spikes on the ends of the sunbursts. Compare the corner statues to those on the globe float. Pfening Archives.

dler who provided Chalmer Condon with a number of recollections concerning the Wallace show which have proven accurate, is the source of the story that states the LaPearl hippo den was inadequate, requiring the construction of a new wagon. Wallace had an ongoing relationship with his hometown wagon builder, Sullivan & Eagle, and gave them the job of building the new den. The 1900 Wallace route book claimed that it cost \$3000, a somewhat exaggerated amount.

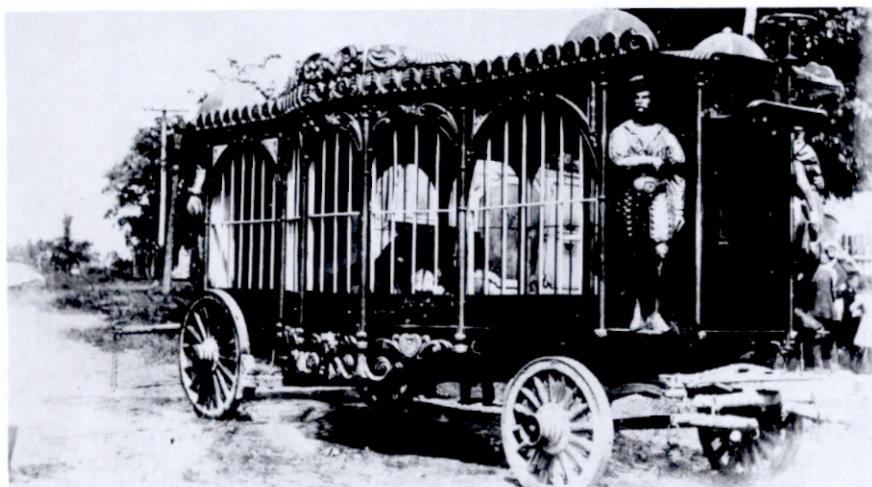
The massive wagon they constructed was a hybrid, incorporating the best parts of two earlier wagons. Parkhurst indicated the under gear of the LaPearl boat bandwagon of 1897 was employed in the construction, an assertion verified by the presence of unusual spikes at the ends of the sunburst panels on both the LaPearl bandwagon and the Wallace hippo den wheels. This unique

windows to allow their occupants to turn around. Frank E. Foster Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa.

detail is not found on any other American parade wagon. The two available photographs of the LaPearl bandwagon show it was crudely constructed, no more than a large rowboat mounted on a spring platform wagon.¹⁴ The disassembly was a simple matter and an easy decision for Wallace, who had several finer bandwagons and tableaus of his own to use.

The major carvings on the wagon, the corner statues, were not created by Sullivan & Eagle carvers, but were the same ones which formerly occupied prominent positions on the Forepaugh globe float. Their relative positions were again switched, but the four unique figures are all identifiable, minute details of the arm positions and clothing arrangements all being identical. The roofline of the new hippo den was probably inspired by the "cottage cage" type vehicles then featured on the John Robinson show. It featured four corner domes and a large central dome, a similar treatment applied to another den possibly constructed the same year. The skyboard lion head was a carved element later repeated on the Sparks two statue tableau skyboard.¹⁵

The hippo den remained a Wallace feature after he acquired the Carl Hagenbeck show in early 1907, that show lacking both a hippo and a suitable cage to house one. Big George eventually died at Cumminsville, Ohio on April 27, 1914 after a circus career of 21 years.¹⁶ The last known photograph of the hippo den on Hagenbeck-Wallace was taken by W. H. B. Jones on October 1, 1917 at Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The top decorative moulding from the wagon was later mounted on a new bay window hippo den used by Hagenbeck-Wallace as early as 1920.¹⁷ Conceivably the later den was an extensive rebuild of the earlier Sullivan & Eagle wagon, but during the reconstruction the forty two

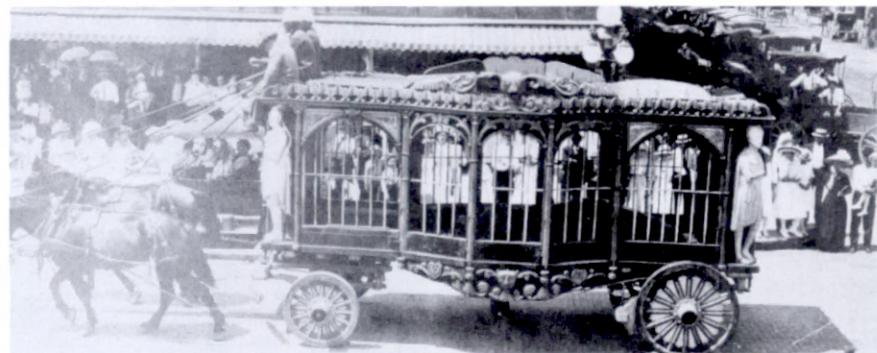


year old corner statues were eliminated. Perhaps the only parts of the old wagon which may have been reused were the tank and the carved cresting from the roofline.

Credit is due Joseph T. Bradbury and Stuart Thayer for their contributions to this article. Albert Conover kindly made available the Richard E. Conover notes concerning the Wallace hippo den.

Footnotes

- Richard E. Conover's authoritative history of the wagon is in his book, *The Fielding Bandchariots* (Xenia: the author, 1969), pp. 42-52.
- New York Clipper*, October 31, 1885, p. 516.
- Richard E. Conover, "The St. George and Dragon Tableau," *Bandwagon*, XV, 6, pp. 13-15. The carved dragons on the same box structure resemble a pair which were used on a small Ringling tableau in the 1890's; however, close comparison indicates they are not the same carvings. See C. P. Fox, *The Great Circus Street Parade In Pictures* (New York: Dover, 1978), p. 23.
- Original negative in the Albert Conover Collection.
- Photos in the Circus World Museum and Minnesota Historical Society.
- New York Clipper*, September 28, 1889, p. 487.
- Photo in the Albert Conover Collection; Charles E. Hewitt, *A Backward Glance* (Brunswick, Me.: Brunswick Pub. Co., 1976); Reading photo in Stuart Thayer Collection.
- Clipper*, October 9, 1897, p. 532.
- Charley killed Henry Hoffman, his keeper of nine years, at Wallace's Peru winterquarters on April 24, 1901. He was shot on April 26 after an attempt to poison him failed. See *Peru (In.) Chronicle*, April 24



This Hagenbeck-Wallace parade view clearly shows the Indian and turbaned figures from the globe wagon. Note that the domes have been removed from the roof of the wagon. Albert Conover Collection.

- and 26, 1901. Ding Dong had a long circus career, succumbing in the fire which destroyed the Cole Bros.' Rochester, Indiana, winterquarters on February 20, 1940.
- New York Clipper*, October 9, 1897, p. 532.
- Danville (Il.) *Evening Chronicle*, April 14, 1898.
- Danville (Il.) *Evening Chronicle*, September 5, 1899. Four cars are believed to have been shipped to the Wallace show, the remaining 16 being sent to Peru.
- Peru (In.) *Daily Chronicle*, September 7, 1899.
- The January 2, 1897 *New York Clipper*, p. 705, indicated the boat was 24 feet long.
- Bandwagon*, VI, 5, pp. 14-15.
- Billboard*, May 9, 1914, p. 22.
- Ralph Miller photograph taken September 6, 1920. Albert Conover now owns the Miller negatives.



The top trim from the 1900 Wallace den was mounted on this hippo den, used by Hagenbeck-Wallace through 1930 or 1931. The differences between the two indicates a major reconstruction took place sometime after 1917. Pfening Archives.

BILL KASISKA'S LETTERHEADS

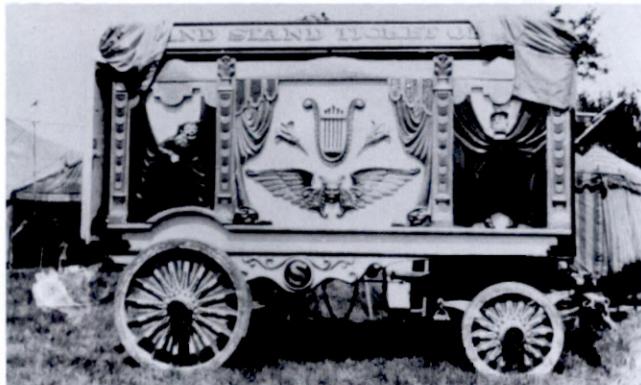


Before Ben Wallace made him a household name in America, Carl Hagenbeck was the world's leading dealer in wild animals, and a major supplier to circuses from the 1870s until his death in 1913. This 1906 letterhead features the title in a bright yellow on a blue background trimmed in green. The border of the sheet is also in green, and the animals are all in natural colors. This colorful piece was worthy of any of Hagenbeck's show business customers.

SPARKS CIRCUS, SEASON OF 1930

A Summary and Photo Supplement

by Joseph T. Bradbury



Grandstand Ticket Wagon (Stage Curtain Tableau) on Sparks Circus lot, season of 1930. Maurice Allaire Collection.

As mentioned in the last installment of this current series of the history of the Sparks Circus, a full sized article on the 1930 season will not be presented. It is felt this season was adequately covered in the author's article, "John Ringling's Circus Empire, His Six Railroad Circuses in 1930" which was printed in the November-December 1973, January-February 1974, and March-April 1974 issues of the *White Tops*. All of these issues are still in print and may be purchased from the *White Tops* publisher. In lieu of a major article this brief summary of the 1930 show and group of "new" Sparks photos are printed here.

Shortly after the conclusion of the 1929 tour John Ringling named Ira M. Watts manager of Sparks for the 1930 season with Frank F. Meyers as his assistant. At the time Watts was the youngest manager of a major circus in

Dancing Girls Tableau on Sparks Circus lot, season of 1930. Maurice Allaire Collection.

the country. While the show was in its winterquarters at Central City Park, Macon, Georgia, preparing for the new season it was announced that the street parade would not be given in 1930, and that the show's traditional opening spec, which had been a dramatic, lyrical type, would be replaced with a simple walk-around which most circuses now presented.

Even though no street parade was given all of the parade vehicles with exception of the steam calliope were carried. These included the Dancing Girls, Dolphin, Horse and Jockey, and Stage Curtain tableau wagons plus the air calliope. The sky and mud boards of the Dancing Girls and Dolphin wagons were removed or modified but they retained their white color scheme of the previous year. The Stage Curtain tableau with a modified skyboard was placed into service as a grandstand ticket wagon. It also kept its white color scheme of 1929. All of the tableau wagons were equipped with canvas tarps and these were often not removed even after they were parked on the lot, the Stage Curtain grandstand ticket wagon of course excepted.

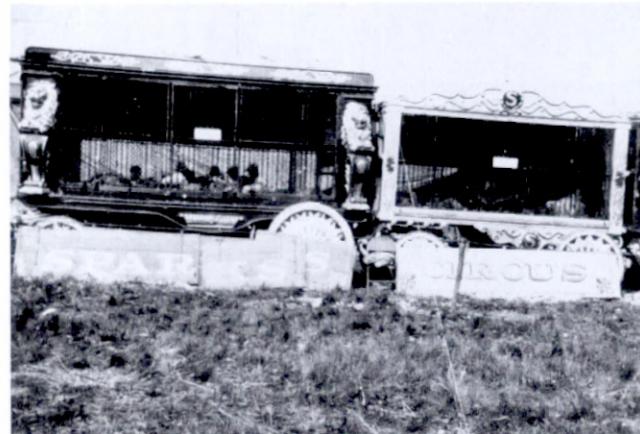
In the early 1950's while visiting the



Dolphin Tableau on Sparks Circus lot, season of 1930. The wagon's skyboard was placed on a cage this season. Maurice Allaire Collection.

King Bros. winterquarters at Central City Park in Macon I talked at length with Ira M. Watts who was with the King show at the time. He showed me some of the buildings then being utilized by King Bros. that had once housed the Sparks show when he was there in the winter of 1929-30. He also pointed out the rail yards of the Macon, Dublin, and Savannah Railroad (now Seaboard System) adjacent to the quarters where the Sparks railroad cars had been parked. I specifically asked Watts about the steam calliope that Sparks had when he arrived in Macon to take command of the show. He said that after John Ringling decided to cancel the street parade for 1930 he was directed to ship the steam calliope on a railroad system flat to the Sarasota quarters which he did. It was never carried on the road in 1930 or 1931, the

Sparks Circus cages in coralled menagerie, season of 1930. Maurice Allaire Collection.



two seasons he served as manager of Sparks.

Many of the acts of the previous season were held over for the 1930 program, including Franz Woska's trained lions and tigers (worked in separate numbers) and the Famous Nelson Family of acrobats.

The show, moving on 20 cars of the same type and number as the previous year, opened its 1930 season in Macon, Georgia on April 17 and closed September 22 at Miami, Florida. It then went into the Ringling-Barnum quarters at Sarasota for the winter. Charles Sparks, now owner of the motorized Downie Bros. Circus, upon learning that the railroad show would be quartered in Sarasota instead of returning to Macon, made arrangements with the city officials to winter his Downie show at Central City Park.



Baggage stock tent on Sparks Circus lot, Bridgeton, N.J., May 12, 1930. William Elbirt Collection.



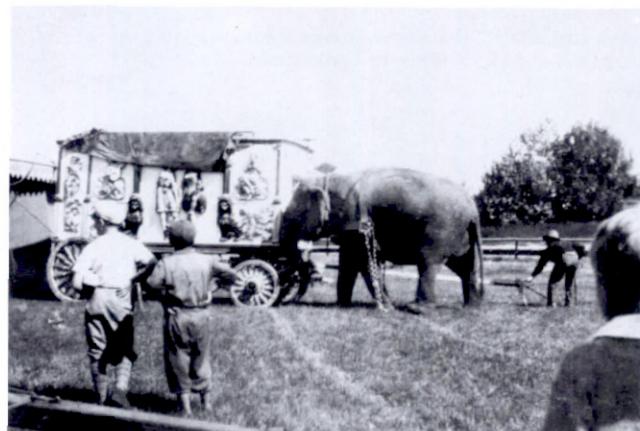
Paul W. Conaway, press representative, standing in front of Sparks Circus general admission ticket wagon on lot at Bridgeton, N.J., May 12, 1930. William Elbirt Collection.



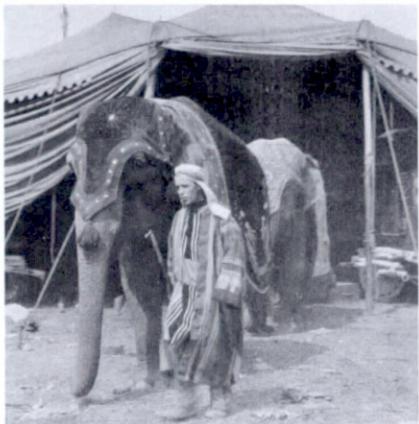
Standing in front of Sparks Circus polar bear cage on lot at Bridgeton, N.J., May 12, 1930 are (l to r) Frank F. Myers, asst. manager, William McGear, and Mayor Erickson of Bridgeton. William Elbirt Collection.



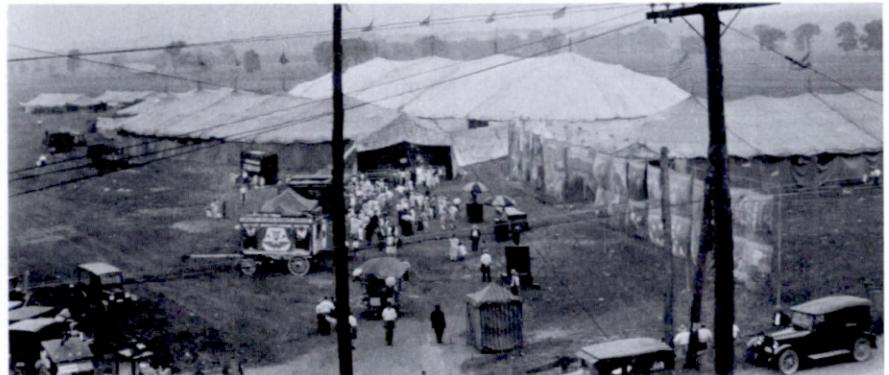
Sparks Circus zebras in front of baggage wagon on lot, season of 1930. Photo by Eddie Jackson.



Elephant pushing Dancing Girls Tableau wagon on Sparks Circus lot, season of 1930. Joe Bradbury Collection.



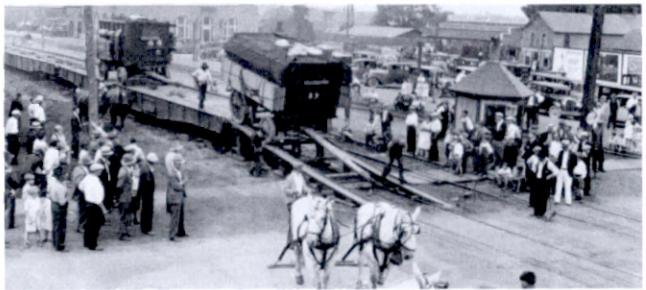
Elephants ready for Sparks Circus opening spec, season of 1930. William Elbirt Collection.



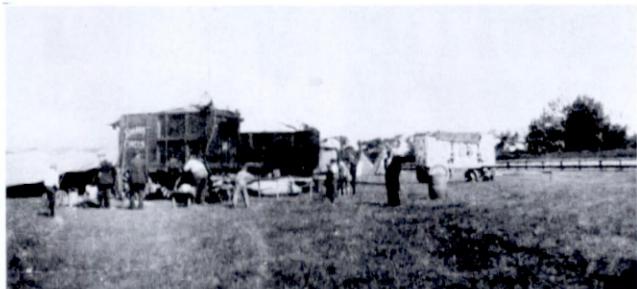
Sparks Circus on lot, season of 1930. New big top in center is flanked by menagerie tent (left) and sideshow (right). Herbert Sicks Photo.



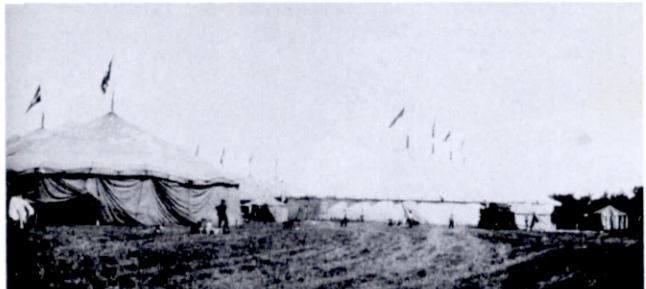
Sparks Circus on lot, season of 1930. Part of new big top is at right. Herbert Sicks Photo.



Unloading Sparks Circus flat cars, season of 1930. Herbert Sicks photo.



Sparks Circus on the lot, season of 1930. At right is the Dancing Girls tableau wagon. Joe Bradbury Collection.



Sparks Circus tents on the lot, season of 1930. New big top is at right. Joe Bradbury Collection.



Sparks Circus baggage wagons No. 41 and 42 on flat cars ready to be unloaded. Gordon M. Potter Collection in Pfening Archives.



Sparks Circus midway, season of 1930 showing full sideshow bannerline in foreground. Herbert Sicks Photo.

Sotheby's Circus Sale

by Bernth Lindfors

One thing is quite clear: Sotheby's, the famous auction house in London, needs better advice on the value of circus materials. When the Bernstein collection (formerly the Gardener collection owned by Fred Martin, as described in Toole-Stott, Vol. 3, p. 294) went on the block on July 26, 1984, Sotheby's had estimated the 54 lots as being worth somewhere between £11,900 and £16,820 (ca. \$15,500-23,400). They sold for £44,900 (ca. \$60,000). Add to this a ten percent "buyer's premium" payable to the auction house plus a fifteen percent value-added tax (VAT) on that premium, and the total comes to around \$66,600—not a bad figure for a collection the nucleus of which sold for just over £100 back in 1931. It appears that Sotheby's hadn't allowed sufficiently for a half-century of inflation coupled with genuine appreciation of circus memorabilia.

As might have been expected, the Bernstein collection proved extremely rich in English circus materials, par-

This fine Price and North bill, which dates from 1843, featured the great American rider Levi J. North. This bill was one of many with an American connection which were sold at the auction.

ticularly handbills, posters, engravings, paintings, pencil drawings, newspaper cuttings and ephemera relating to performances at Astley's Amphitheatre from 1777 to 1862. Fifteen of the fifty-four lots were comprised exclusively of Astley's material; these were sold first and fetched consistently high prices. The largest lots—42 handbills and posters from 1777-1800, 28 more from 1801-1824, 41 more from 1825-1861 sold for £4200, £1900 and £4400 respectively, the principal buyer being Hackhofer, a German collector and dealer. A single framed 1789 engraving of Young Astley riding while balanced on one foot brought £420. As in the rest of the auction, the final bids were usually at least two or three times higher than the estimates, the only bargain being a set of six pencil drawings and watercolors of Amphitheatre architecture which sold for only £160, well below the £200-300 evaluation by Sotheby's. Perhaps the appraisers, accustomed to dealing with fine art, were more impressed with unique hand drawings than with samples of commercial printed matter.

There were also a good many bills and posters from other nineteenth century English circuses—Batty's, Cornwall's,

Price and Powell's, Sanger's—as well as some scrapbooks and programs from twentieth century circuses—Mills, Boston, Carmo—but these did not tend to do as well as similar materials from nineteenth century theatres and amusement halls. A collection of over fifty bills, posters, views, and caricatures from shows at various theatres went for £2600. A similar mass of handbills, programs, posters and illustrations from Egyptian Hall, were Tom Thumb, Chang and Eng, Catlin's North American Indians, Three German Lilliputians, M. Robin the French Wizard and many others had been on display between 1819 and 1878, was knocked down for £1800. A smaller collection from Westminster Royal Aquarium featuring such performers as Chang the Chinese Giant, the Beautiful Tiger Lady Senorita Anita, Krao the Missing Link, Zazel the human cannonball, and the Tattooed Greek sold for £900. Two lots on country and city fairs went for something less (£700, £400).

There were a few American items—a photo of Buffalo Bill, advertisements and a typewritten itinerary for Broncho Bill's Circus, some Barnum and Bailey programs, and portraits of various American performers on European tours—but these tended to be mixed in with the other lots. Two Ringling

Another Price and North bill, also from 1843, which was sold at the auction.



J. W. FEE, Printer, 74 Newgate, Lambeth, nearly opposite the Victoria Theatre.



Brothers and Barnum and Bailey posters, designed and signed by McKnight Kauffer, were sold together for £450.

Engravings, woodcuts and lithographs of eighteenth and nineteenth century European equestrians did quite well. There were four such lots covering Hughes's Riding School or Horse Academy (1772), Jacob Bates (1766), Alexandre Guerra (ca. 1800), Baptiste Loisset (1833), Johnson the Irish Tartar, Mr. Kemp, and a variety of other individuals and companies. These sold for between £380 and £950, the older and more ample collections attracting the higher bids.

Animals were one of the highlights of the auction. The highest price paid for a single item all afternoon was £1300 for a marvelous pictorial broadside, framed and glazed, of an elephant, with a fascinating accompanying text entitled "A True and Perfect Description of the Strange and Wonderful Elephant Sent from the East Indies, and Arrived at London, 3 August 1675." The auction catalog stated that this broadside "appears to be very rare" and was different from the other two copies known to exist. Nonetheless, Sotheby's appraised it at a paltry £100-150. Hot bidding quickly established its real value at about ten times that estimate.

Top prices were paid for two other seventeenth century engravings of elephants that were included in a lot of 29 animal illustrations (£1900); for a group of eighteenth and nineteenth century handbills, ballad sheets, watercolors and woodcuts of "performing animals" such as the Amazing Learned Pig, Toby the original Musical Performing Pig, the Learned Cats, and the Famous Dogs Hector and Bruin (£1000); for similar materials relating to Wombwell's Royal Menagerie (£950); and for a miscellaneous collection of menagerie handbills, posters and views depicting such creatures as a "Stupendious Pelican" and a "Bonassus," apparently an American buffalo, (£650). A woman representing the Tower of London managed to acquire two small lots of broadsides (£200) and bills (£280) devoted to the Royal Menagerie in the Tower of London, but she lost out on more impressive collections (£550, £1300) of pictorial material on the same subject, some of it excellent eighteenth century mezzotints and engravings. Choice old German and English prints on lion taming attracted very respectable bids (£220, £400).

Human performers of one kind or another were favorites at the auction too. A very fine collection of clowns, acrobats and fire eaters—Robert Powell (1752-1790), Madame Girardelli (1814-1820), Anthony Madox the Surprising English Posture Master (1753), Duncan Macdonald on the slack wire, the Bounding Bricks of Babylon, and



A top item at the auction was this fine engraved composite view by G. P. Nusbigel of the famous English rider Jacob Bates. It dates from 1766.

others — was finally knocked down for £950. A group of engravings of colorful street performers and street sellers brought £450. Three posters of conjurors (M. Jacobs and the Great Wizard of the North) went for £420, and a much larger lot of handbills, portraits and illustrations having to do with con-

The auction was strong in material relating to the career of Andrew Ducrow. This engraving was one of a set of twelve which sold for over \$1000.

jurors, mechanical workers, ventriloquists and quacks was sold for £1400.

Freaks were especially well-represented, the giants by Anthony Frank (1575), Johannes Sander (1683), Bernardo Gigli (1755), Patrick O'Brien (1804), etc.; the dwarves by Catharina Helena Stöberin (1775), Myneher Wybrand Lolkes (1790), John Wormberg, Tom Thumb, etc. In addition, there were excellent portraits of Sartjee the Hottentot Venus (1811), George Alexander the Extraordinary Spotted Boy, Miss Biffin the armless, legless artist, and a host of other prodigies. The giants, given the extraordinary size and quality of that collection, quite appropriately brought the biggest bid



(£1300), the dwarves and other human freaks fetched £700, and an interesting assortment of mermaids and animal freaks drew £400.

Almost as fascinating as the material being sold were the people doing the buying. The auction room was filled to capacity, with some of the participants perched on window sills and others standing up or leaning against walls and cabinets. The bidding was brisk and intense, most lots being knocked down in less than thirty seconds. Private collectors and dealers from Germany, England and the United States were most prominent in the action on the floor, but there was also a mysterious bidder monitoring the proceedings on a telephone and competing for many of the best lots. A good number of

items went "to the telephone." However, the telephone met stiff resistance from the Germans on the older material, especially the Astley handbills and posters. A private collector named Hüber seated in the back row signalled his interest in an item to the auctioneer by propping his ballpoint pen vertically on his stomach. He usually came into the bidding late, but whenever his pen was erect, it did not fall until the auctioneer's hammer sounded. Herr Hüber walked away with eleven of the choicest lots.

Lord Bernstein, now 85 years old, was quoted in the press as saying that he had decided to disperse his collection on the market "to encourage younger collectors." The collectors and dealers at the auction certainly were younger

than Lord Bernstein, but they hardly could be considered mere youths. Most were elderly or middle-aged men and women who apparently had a good deal of money to spend. The younger people in the crowd seldom opened their mouths except when their chins dropped in awe of a exceptionally high bid. So perhaps the lesson that can be drawn from Sotheby's sale of Lord Bernstein's excellent collection is simply this: big-time circus collecting now requires a very big bankroll. It is not the kind of hobby that ordinary working-class people can afford to take up. This of course may have been true to some degree in the past, but today it is so obvious as to be undeniable. Someone should perhaps take Sotheby's appraisers aside and whisper this elementary fact of life in their ear.

BILL KASISKA'S LETTERHEADS



The pictorials on this 1897 J.H. LaPearl letter sheet leave little doubt as to the type of business in which he was engaged. This oversize letterhead measures approximately 10" by 17" and is in a reddish brown with LaPearl's portrait in light blue.

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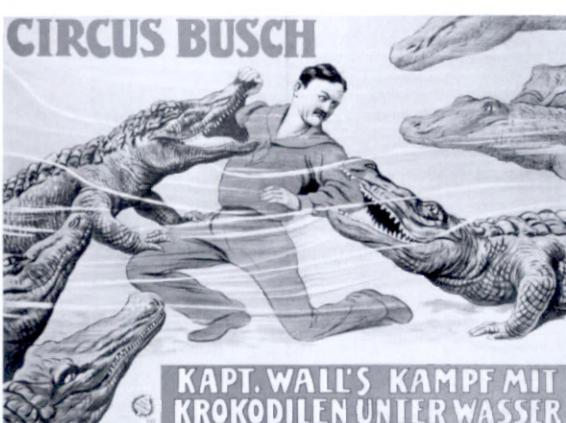
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